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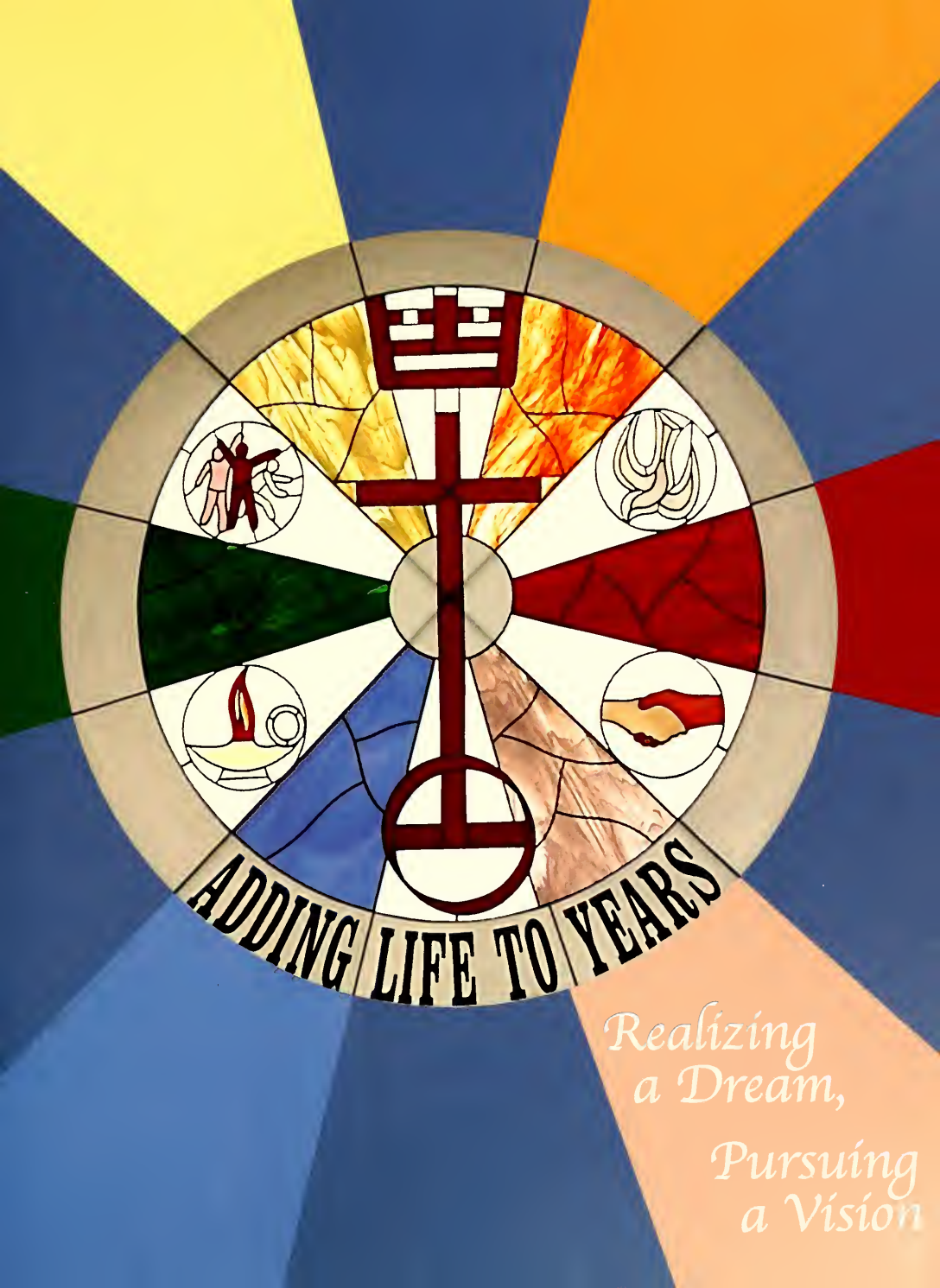


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ADDING LIFE TO YEARS

*Realizing
a Dream,
Pursuing
a Vision*



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Dr. Donald P. Flick

It is with sincere appreciation that we acknowledge Dr. Donald P. Flick for his dedication, patience and tenacity in compiling the information for this book. Don's many years as UCRH Chief Executive made him an ideal author for this history. It's not likely that he realized what a task it would be when he agreed to accept the challenge. Through countless hours of research and study he painstakingly organized pictures, documents, reports, meeting minutes and hand scribbled notes to prepare this book.

We are grateful to Dr. Flick not only for helping to create this document, but for contributing to the history through his years of dedicated service and leadership to United Church Retirement Homes.

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≡ Mission Statement ≡

*The mission of
United Church Retirement Homes, Inc.
is to carry on Christian ministry
that adds life to the years of older adults,
responding to physical, mental, social
and spiritual needs.*

*The ministry shall help enhance
the quality of life by providing
retirement facilities and programs
of outreach into the wider community.*

2001

(The last sentence of the mission statement originally read, "The ministry enhances the quality of life by providing retirement facilities and programs of outreach into the wider community." It was altered in 1985.)

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≡Preface≡

Writing a history would seem to be an easy task, especially when you are only dealing with thirty years and you have been intimately involved in at least seventeen of those years. The problem was the rapid growth of United Church Retirement Homes and trying to decide what information should be included. There are so many persons who have contributed so much to this ministry that you would like to mention all of them. There are many persons whose names do not appear in this history who deserve to be thanked and recognized. It is my hope and prayer that those who have been mentioned will symbolize for everyone who picks up this document the wonderful parade of persons who have unselfishly contributed to the ministry of UCRH and how it was the combined efforts of everyone involved that has made this a successful and meaningful venture.

The material gathered for the writing of this brief history came primarily from the minutes of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee over the ten years it took to plan for UCRH and then for the thirty years it has been providing services and care for older adults. In some cases the information might vary slightly from information printed in other places, but effort has been made to collect accurate information. The important thing is not necessarily the dates of events but the dream and spirit that brought them into being and their effectiveness to minister once they were a reality.

A number of persons were interviewed who were active in the formative years of UCRH. Their greatest contribution was recalling how this ministry had to be "first class" and how for a few of those early years, they seemed to be pursuing an "impossible dream." A special thanks to those who were interviewed, not only for their willingness to share but more importantly for their contributions over the years to the work and ministry of UCRH.

Those interviewed were:

Mr. Adrian Shuford, Jr.

Mr. Claude S. Abernethy, Jr.

Rev. John W. Settlemyre

Ms. Edith Grimes

Ms. Ernestine G. Kennedy

Rev. G. Melvin Palmer

Ms. Margaret W. Davis

Rev. Van D. Grimes

Dr. R. Leroy Howell

Mr. Henry Kennedy

Mr. Jack H. Frank

Rev. Philip Laucks

Rev. Aubrey Hedrick

Mr. J. T. Baxter Morton

As the writing of the history began, it became evident that there were decisions to be made that could not be made by one individual, so an editorial committee was asked to help. They were asked to give direction and suggestions regarding both content and layout. Thanks so very much to this committee.

Those who served were:

Rev. John W. Settlemyre

Mr. Thomas V. Tiemann

Ms. Jolene C. Bray

Rev. F. Michael Hooper

Ms. Betty A. Pfeiler

Mr. J. T. Baxter Morton

Mr. Jack H. Frank

Ms. Mary Wesley

Several persons read and commented on the manuscript before the final draft was presented for printing. A special word of thanks to them, especially to Dr. D. Lee Jessup and Ms. Edith Grimes for their comments and suggestions.

It is said that it takes a village to raise a child and it is just as true that it takes a village/community to write a history. The staff of the corporate office of UCRH was quite cooperative even though effort was made not to disturb their important day-to-day responsibilities. A special word of thanks to Ms. Hope Taylor, development assistant, for the research and support she was so willing to offer. What only she and the author know is how much material there is on file to help recapture the historical journey of UCRH and how, while at the time it doesn't seem important to save and creatively file all of this material, it is important, and every effort should be made to preserve certain documents and materials in a systematic way.

A very important word of appreciation and thanks goes to my dear wife, Jo Anne, who not only had to listen to my thoughts about the history and the task of putting it on paper, but also did a great deal of the typing and correcting of the manuscript.

This has been a great adventure, and I extend my thanks to all of the folks who helped make it possible, especially to all of the residents, employees, volunteers, friends and families who have made the ministry of UCRH the successful, meaningful ministry it is. I thank God for the opportunity to have been part of this ministry at such a wonderful time in its history.

Introduction

It was during an interview with Mr. Claude Abernethy, Jr., a former president of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc., and a nephew of Julius W. Abernethy, Sr., that the title for this history was introduced. Mr. Abernethy stated that his uncle felt that United Church Retirement Homes, Inc., was his greatest achievement. "Uncle Jule," as he was affectionately called, who was the primary benefactor in getting this ministry underway, always said, "Everything must be approached with a dream and a vision greater than what appears to be possible," and he further stated that "helping to establish United Church Retirement Homes was the finest thing I have ever done."

United Church Retirement Homes, Inc., was a dream for many years before it took shape and form. It was envisioned and proposed in the early 1950s, but it took the gift of land and the commitment of a rather large sum of money by Julius and Maye Abernethy to enable the ministry to become a reality.

Many people worked long and hard to bring United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. into being. This brief history attempts to record some of their efforts and the progress of the ministry since the formal opening of the first building in August 1971. An apology is extended for any omissions with respect to events, experiences or persons. There will be some, unfortunately, because some records of events were not readily available, and space as well as circumstances limited how much information could or should be shared. Choices had to be made regarding what was thought to be of the most interest to persons and what gave meaning to the ongoing vision of this ministry. Change is taking place nearly every minute in this work and ministry so that such things as terminology or staff designations may not be the same tomorrow as they were when this history was written. The important thing is the spirit and effectiveness with which this ministry is carried out. Through this effort records have been compiled that may help individuals to more quickly research additional information regarding the challenges and growth of this ministry over the thirty years of its history. Please inform the Corporate Development Office of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. if you find mistakes or omissions which need to be corrected in future printings.

This history was prepared for the thirtieth anniversary of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. by Dr. Donald P. Flick, who served as Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer from 1984 to 1997. It seemed important to compile this history while many of the persons who were actively involved in the formative years of the ministry could share human interest stories as well as historical facts. Comments and recollections of persons who gave unselfishly of their time and talents to bring this ministry into being are woven throughout the text.

The Board of Directors of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc., at its regular meeting in February 2000, authorized the compilation of this history. It is dedicated not only to those who brought this ministry into being, but also to the fine people who have served on staff, and particularly those who have directly touched the lives of the residents. Those persons who provide the care and support of the residents on a day-to-day basis are truly the ones who have made United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. the fine ministry it has always been.

May the reading of this history inform and inspire, so that the vision of a high-quality ministry among older adults can continue to grow and expand as it seeks to be responsive to the needs of future generations.



Editorial Committee, left to right, Jack H. Frank, John W. Settlemyre, J.T. Morton, Thomas V. Tiemann, Donald P. Flick, Jolene C. Bray and E. Michael Hooper. Not present for picture, Betty A. Pfeiler and Mary Wesley.

Stained-Glass Window



Steve Cook (left) and Donald Flick (right) preparing to install stained glass window, Spirit Place, Abernethy Center.

The stained-glass window on the front cover of this historical journal proclaims in graphic form the mission statement of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. It is a Christian ministry which is expressed by the cross and crown in the center of the window. This symbol says "this is a ministry of the United Church of Christ," since this cross is the central symbol of that denomination.

The cross and crown remind us of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who came in human form so that we might find a new relationship with God and dedicate our lives to living in a loving and joyous relationship with our Creator. The cross and crown rest on an orb, which represents the world divided into sections, to call to our remembrance the words of Christ, "You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

The four individual panels in the window illustrate for us how United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. strives to respond to the physical, mental, social and spiritual needs of older adults. The physical is represented by human figures depicting an inclusive humanity with a variety of physical conditions. The mental is represented by the lamp of knowledge, and says to us that we have a thirst for learning new things at every cycle along our journey of life. The social is represented by clasped hands, reminding us that we are social beings and that we are at our best when we are in loving, meaningful relationships with others. The spiritual is represented by the descending dove, which symbolizes for us the Holy Spirit. Regardless of our age, it is important that we grow in our understanding of God and in our relationship with God, who brought us into being and promises us eternal life. God is always trying to enter our lives in new ways, empowering us, comforting us, restoring us, and offering us hope for what lies ahead.

These panels, which lift up the various areas of our lives where we need help and support, appear in a wheel. This wheel characterizes aging as "the turning of the wheel ... the gradual fulfillment of life." As the wheel of life turns, each person's needs vary according to the conditions of the moment. Our needs as they relate to the physical may be more intense today than they were yesterday or will be tomorrow, or our need for a clearer understanding of God may be greater today than it has ever been in our life. The rainbow colors of the wheel allude to the changes that occur in the intensity of life from stage to stage. As the wheel of life turns and we pass through various cycles of our lives, we sometimes discover that the quality of life is even better at age 83 than it was at age 38! What the turning of the wheel says to us is that there needs to be sensitivity for the condition of every individual and an appropriate response to meet their current circumstances. The ministry of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. was established to carry on a program of care that is designed for the whole person and to make every attempt to minister to that person's needs at any given time.

The original window was designed in the late 1980s as United Church Retirement Homes began to think seriously about expanding its ministry and responding in new ways to the growing challenges of older adults. The Board of Directors shared ideas and concerns for the future of this ministry and adopted a revised mission statement, philosophy statement and motto. They then had staff members and artists design and construct a symbol that would express in picture form the commitment of those responsible for carrying on this ministry, so the vision and intent of its founders would never be lost.

When the new multipurpose building on the Abernethy Center campus in Newton, N.C., was constructed and dedicated in 1989, a stained-glass window was placed in what became known as Spirit Place to express to all who entered there the mission and motto of United Church Retirement Homes. It was decided that one way of tying together all of the work of this expanding ministry was to place a similar window or symbol in a building wherever those responsible for this work were reaching out to touch the lives of more persons in need in some special way.

The window in Spirit Place on the Abernethy Center campus was placed there in memory of Mamie Elizabeth Flick and Alfred Conrad Whitener by their family and loved ones. Mamie E. Flick was the mother of Donald P. Flick, who served as Executive Director of UCRH from 1984 to 1997. Alfred Whitener was the stepfather of Jo Anne Flick, who worked in key positions at Abernethy Center from 1985 to 1991.

The window in the rotunda of the main building on the Piedmont Center campus, Thomasville, N.C., was placed there in memory of C. Boyce Sink by his family and friends. C. Boyce Sink was one of the key persons who helped make it possible for this center to be established and constructed.

The window in the dining room of Shepherd House in Chapel Hill, N.C., was placed there in 1998 in honor of Jodon Anne Flick, Dona Flick Richards, Paul Townsend Flick and Conrad Lloyd Flick by their parents.

The window in the entrance lobby of the main building on the campus of Lake Prince Center in Suffolk, Va., was placed in honor of the fortieth wedding anniversary of Donald and Jo Anne Flick and in appreciation of their efforts on behalf of United Church Retirement Homes by their family and friends.

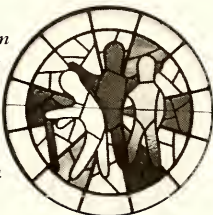
The windows depicting the mission statement were constructed by Steve Cook, a stained-glass artist from Jonesborough, Tenn. The motto of United Church Retirement Homes is "Adding Life to Years," and appears on the windows along with the wheel design, inspired by Henri Nouwen's book, *"Aging - the Fulfillment of Life."*

Mission Statement As Portrayed In Stained-Glass Windows

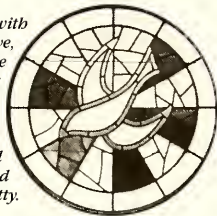
The Cross and Crown window was placed over the nurses station in the Clapp-Leinbach Health Care Unit at Abernethy Center by Roy E. and Alma Leinbach, Jr.



The panel of human figures, depicting an inclusive humanity with various physical needs, was placed in the Residential Mall by Samuel and Virginia Irby.

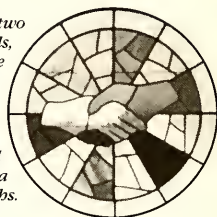


The panel with the descending dove, which symbolizes the Holy Spirit and reminds us of our continual need for spiritual growth, was placed in the Residential Mall by Ada P. and Kenneth O. Beatty.

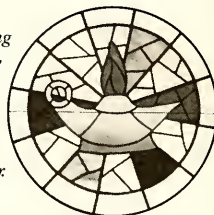


At the time the Residential Mall was built and the addition was made to the Clapp-Leinbach Health Care unit on the Abernethy Center campus in Newton, N.C., small stained glass windows were installed at various locations to give character to the building and to emphasize the various aspects of the Mission Statement of United Church Retirement Homes. These windows were crafted by Lawing Stained Glass Window Company of Statesville, N.C. They can be reproduced for other locations as this ministry continues to grow and persons wish to remind all who live, work, or visit that this is a Christian ministry designed to minister to the whole person, responding to the physical, mental, social and spiritual needs of older adults.

The panel portraying two clasped outstretched hands, which remind us that we are social beings and are at our best when we are in loving relationship with one another, was placed in the Residential Mall by William and Anna Laura Griffiths.



The panel containing the lamp of knowledge, depicting how humans search for knowledge and learn new things at every cycle of life, was placed in the Residential Mall by Nevin and Cecil Mae Feather.



Mission Statement

The mission of United Church Retirement Homes is to carry on Christian ministry that adds life to the years of older adults, responding to physical, mental, social and spiritual needs. The ministry (shall help) enhance the quality of life by providing retirement facilities and programs of outreach into the wider community.

Section I

Relationships

The sponsoring agent that brought UCRH into being was the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ, and while UCRH is an independent corporation, it continues to look to the congregations and individual members of the conference for support. The following statement in the Articles of Incorporation is one of its stated purposes:

"To conduct and manage a retirement community or communities for aging members of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ and for such other persons as may be admitted from time to time in accordance with the rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Directors of the Corporation."

While UCRH historically and organizationally has ties to the United Church of Christ, it has always reached out in service to persons, as stated in its Philosophy Statement, "regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, handicap, or sex." The ministry is to "preserve the dignity and worth of the individual" and to "reach out in the spirit of love" regardless of the person's religious or denominational affiliation.

United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. is a church-related, not-for-profit, 501-C-3 corporation. Persons can receive a tax deduction for their contributions to its ministry. It has benefited many persons over the years by maintaining tax-exempt status at many levels. It has made every effort to be true to everything required by this designation.

The United Church of Christ came into being in 1957, about the same time the dream for United Church Retirement Home began to receive attention among the church persons who would make up the constituency of the Southern Conference of the United Church. This new denomination was the union of two major Protestant groups, the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Churches. Each of these denominations was in turn the result of an earlier union. The Evangelical and Reformed Church had come into being in 1934 when the Evangelical Synod of North America and the Reformed Church in the United States united. These two denominations had their roots in the German settlers who came to the United States in the early seventeen and eighteen hundreds with ties to both the Reformed and Lutheran churches in Germany. The Congregational Christian Churches was a union of the Congregational Churches which was organized when the Pilgrims came to this country in 1620 and the Christian Churches which came into being in the early 1800s when frontier churches of Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists came together. Through the years the United Church of Christ has welcomed others into its fellowship, so it celebrates a wide variety of traditions in its common life. The United Church is an ecumenical church actively involved in both the National Council and World Council of Churches.

Historically, the denominations that made up the United Church reached out to establish visible ministries such as children's home, hospitals and "homes for the aged and aging." So like its predecessor denominations, the United Church has actively reached out to establish model visible ministries among older adults, and United Church Retirement Home, Inc. is one such ministry. As a church-related institution, it is related to the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries of the United Church of Christ and to the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging.

When UCRH was incorporated in November 1961, all of the incorporating members were from the Evangelical and Reformed Church of the Southern Synod. The Southern Conference of the United Church came into being in 1965 as the result of the merger of the national church bodies. Since 1965 the members of the Board of Directors have been elected by the Southern Conference. This has enabled the work of UCRH to maintain a very high level of visibility as a ministry to be supported by the churches of the Conference.

Organizationally UCRH is an autonomous structure owned and operated by its elected Board of Directors. As the Articles of Incorporation state:

"The control and operation of the corporation (shall be) vested in a Board of Directors, who shall have general management of the affairs of the corporation."

Besides keeping its close ties with the United Church, UCRH has maintained a concern for involving persons close to the various facilities in ways that give support and guidance to the ministry. Each residential community has what was originally known as an advisory committee but which grew into an

Operations Council. These councils are composed of people from the area where the facility/cost center is located and help provide support and guidance to the administrative staff.

UCRH has also always recognized the need for resident participation at various levels, because as one board member put it, "If it were not for the residents there would be no such ministry." There are Resident Councils and Resident Committees at each of the continuing care retirement communities where ideas are generated and concerns are shared which help deal with immediate challenges and help shape the vision for the future. Effort is always made to get grassroots input to help improve the ministry at every location and keep lines of communication open between residents and staff as well as between residents and the Board of Directors.



Section II

Realizing A Dream

Historical Overview of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc

It began as a dream in the hearts and minds of a few dedicated individuals in the early 1950s and grew into a "wonderful ministry beyond anything they had imagined." In the spring of 1954 the Benevolent Institution Committee recommended to the Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church that the Synod investigate the possibility of locating a "home for the aging and aged" on the campus of Nazareth Children's Home at Rockwell, N.C. The idea received favorable support from the Synod, and the Nazareth Children's home Board of Managers was instructed to study the feasibility of such a project on its campus. Authorization was given for the solicitation and receiving of "gifts of money, bonds, and property in anticipation of such" a home. Mr. J. Yorke Peeler, then the treasurer of Nazareth Children's Home, was asked to be the custodian of any funds or other assets made available for the establishment of such a project.

Homewood Retirement Center in Williamsport, Md., was the closest institution of the Evangelical and Reformed Church to the Southern Synod offering care at that time to elderly members. Some of the churches of the Southern Synod were giving financial support to Homewood, and members of the Synod were encouraged to look to Homewood for needed services for the elderly. The problem was one of distance, as well as the fact that the number of older adults needing nursing and custodial care was growing. Southern Synod needed its own visible ministry where response to the needs of the aged and the aging could be made closer to home.

During the year after the dream was formally considered by Southern Synod, not much positive support was generated. The treasurer reported at the Synod meeting in 1955 that only \$555.81 had been contributed since authorization had been given for collecting funds, and it had been determined that such a venture would take a rather large amount of money and a great deal of effort to meet all the state requirements for establishing a home for the aged. Synod already had some priorities which were rather challenging and which required considerable funding and much attention. In addition, Synod was already committed to helping construct a chapel on the Catawba College campus and an expansion of the Blowing Rock Assembly Grounds. However, the dream of starting a special ministry among the elderly was too exciting to be allowed to drop, and so Synod acted "to ask the churches to continue to take offerings for such a cause, and where advantageous, to make the proposed home for the aged a subject for discussion in local official circles." Groups such as the Women's Guild and the Churchmen's Brotherhood began to discuss the need for such a ministry, which helped keep the dream alive.

At the Synod meeting in 1957 a more positive step was taken towards bringing into being a home for the aged. Those few individuals determined to establish such a home were able to convince the Synod to appoint a special committee, independent of Nazareth Children's Home Board, to further study the feasibility of establishing a home for the aged within the bounds of the Southern Synod. The action taken was "to appoint a committee to further study ways and means of establishing a home for the aged" within the bounds of Synod and to bring back to Synod a proposal for "advancing the cause." The committee was appointed, consisting of the Rev. Lawrence A. Leonard of Asheboro, N.C., chair, Rev. Roy E. Leinbach, Jr., of Newton, N.C., Mr. John Robinson, Sr., of Salisbury, N.C. and Mr. Willie F. Everhart of Lexington, N.C.

Under the enthusiastic leadership of Lawrence Leonard, the committee immediately began its work, investigating what other denominations were doing in the field of aging, what was required by the state for such a venture, and what the need was for such services within the churches of Synod and the wider community. The committee became so convinced of the importance of this project that they were able by as early as the next year to bring a resolution to the delegates of Synod to take positive steps to establish a home for the aged. At the 1958 meeting of Synod, action was taken to establish a twelve-member Board of Trustees and to charge them with "the responsibility for administering the affairs of the proposed institution and to be invested with the control and care of all funds" raised for this purpose. The establishment of a home for the aged within the bounds of the Southern Synod, which included the Evangelical and Reformed congregations primarily in the western part of North Carolina, was now complicated in the late 1950s by the merger of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Churches which took place in 1956 on the national level to form the United Church of Christ. Talks were underway for the formation of the Southern Conference of the United Church, which was to include churches in North Carolina and the Tidewater area of eastern Virginia. These merger talks were also complicated, since

they involved in North Carolina not two, but three distinct church judicatories: Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, the Convention of the South of the Christian Church, and the Southern Convention of the Congregational Christian Churches. These groups were struggling to bring into being the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ, which did officially occur in 1965. Because the dream of establishing a home for the aged was taking place within the Southern Synod at the same time the merger talks and organizational planning were taking place for the formation of the United Church of Christ, the Synod directed the Board of Trustees it had elected to “work in conjunction with any similar board or committee appointed by the Southern Convention of the Congregational Christian Churches, Homewood Church Home Board of Managers, Nazareth Children’s Home Board of Managers, or any other benevolent institution.”

The Board of Trustees of the Home for the Aged of Southern Synod held its first official meeting on Oct. 21, 1958, following the fall meeting of the Synod, where they organized and outlined some procedural plans.

The members of the Board were:

Rev. Lawrence A. Leonard, Chairman
Mr. Willie F. Everhart, Vice Chairman
Mrs. Hiram E. (Margaret) Davis, Secretary
Dr. Verne Blackwelder, Treasurer
Rev. Edwin M. Alcorn
Rev. G. Melvin Palmer

Mrs. Henry (Ernestine) Kennedy, Jr.
Mr. J. Yorke Peeler
Mrs. W. C. (Helen) Lyerly
Rev. Joshua L. Levens
Mr. Harold Lemons
Rev. John W. Settlemtyre

This board knew that it had a great deal to learn about how to establish a home, what the regulations for such a venture were on both a state and federal level, and how money could be raised to make the dream a reality. As the board members met with such groups as the North Carolina Medical Care Commission and the state Nursing Home Board, they learned that a change of name for the project would be helpful in securing funds and receiving licensure approval. So on Feb. 10, 1959, the Board of Trustees voted to change the name of their dream to “The Evangelical and Reformed Nursing Home.” This name, however, did not remain in place for very long because it soon became evident that it would be too complicated and involved to pursue funding through the Medical Care Commission at that time. It was also the primary concern of the board to work towards the goal of a retirement home and it was felt to refer to it as a nursing home would be misleading.

The Board of Trustees elected to pursue this dream was further frustrated when they received word that those responsible for bringing into being the new Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ had proposed a plan to “work together to form one orphanage and one Home for the Aged.” What this group was proposing was “to enlarge the orphanage for the church bodies at Nazareth Children’s Home at Rockwell, N.C., and to construct a Home for the Aged on the Elon Children’s Home campus at Elon College, N.C.” This proposal was given consideration by the Board of Trustees working on establishing a “home for the aged” but it was felt that such a plan would delay action too long with all of the legal and historical problems that would need to be worked out to make such a plan feasible. There was also a suggestion that Homewood Corp. of Williamsport, Md., be asked to assist in the organization and construction of a home in the Southern Conference, perhaps as a fourth unit of their operation. It was thought at the time that this might be a procedure that would expedite the progress of the project. The Board of Trustees, elected by the Southern Synod to proceed with the project, decided to work independently from the major church bodies and to move towards incorporating as a separate entity. Through the guidance of legal counsel, the articles of incorporation were to be written to meet all of the requirements of the merger. A committee, chaired by Rev. G. Melvin Palmer, was appointed to draft a constitution and bylaws, and Mr. Joe Leonard, an attorney from Lexington and a member of First Reformed Church, was employed as legal counsel. The money and a few shares of Duke Power Co. stock being held by Mr. J. Yorke Peeler, who had served as treasurer for the original committee, were now transferred to the treasury of what was now to become the United Church Retirement Home, Inc., with Dr. Verne Blackwelder of Lenoir, N.C., as treasurer.

While a committee worked on incorporation and the development of a constitution and bylaws, others on the board were busy dealing with location and fund raising. Notice went out across the Synod regarding the need for suitable land for a church-related retirement facility. By the end of 1958 the group had investigated land opportunities in many locations such as Lenoir, Concord, Lexington, Thomasville, Conover, Greensboro and Burlington, N.C. To help raise needed funding for the work of the committee, as

well as startup money for the project, the churches of Southern Synod were challenged at each Synod meeting by those engrossed in the dream to write the project into their budgets and to encourage individuals to make contributions for this worthwhile endeavor. It wasn't until April 25, 1961, however, that a more formal financial approach was taken when Synod voted "that each congregation of the Synod accept a minimum of one dollar per member as a quota for the year 1961-62, this money to be used for the establishment of a program and securing of competent professional help in drawing up plans for a retirement home for our people."

For several years the Synod reaffirmed this original motion, and while the response of the churches was not as great as had been hoped for, this action did help keep the dream alive and make local church members aware of the need for this important ministry. Enough money was collected to give encouragement to the Board of Trustees and to provide working capital for planning and research. An appeal also went out through various church publications for persons to remember this project in their wills and to understand that gifts of stocks, bonds and property were needed and appropriate. United Church Retirement Home, Inc. became a reality when on Nov. 13, 1961, the corporation was formed and recorded in Rowan County with Mr. Willie Everhart, Rev. Dr. A. Odell Leonard and Mr. Elmer P. Nance acting as incorporators. The Rev. Dr. Harvey A. Fesperman, then staff person of the Southern Synod, was named as registered agent, with offices at 204 Lantz Ave., Salisbury, N.C. At the following May 1962 Synod meeting, an Investment Committee was appointed to formally solicit and manage assets to be accumulated for the establishment of a retirement home. Mr. J. Yorke Peeler, Mr. Willie F. Everhart and the Rev. G. Melvin Palmer were named to this committee.

Besides the need for funds to establish a home, the selection of an appropriate site now became the critical issue. The board was often asked why it took so long to make a site selection when there had been so many sites offered as possible locations. Certainly one answer was the need for enough money to develop a particular site, but another answer, given by a person working on the project was "Because we had decided that whatever was done, it had to be first-rate."

As time passed, some churches and church leaders became impatient with what seemed to be a very slow process. The Lexington/Thomasville area seemed to be the most logical location for a retirement home, since it was about the geographical center of the Synod and boasted a concentration of strong, influential congregations. In the spring of 1964, Rev. Huit R. Carpenter, then at Calvary Church, Thomasville, initiated a gathering of representatives from four major Lexington/Thomasville congregations: Zion, Heidelberg, Calvary and Emanuel. The group held a series of meetings with the hope of expediting the process and perhaps influencing the Board of Trustees towards the desirability of their area. They passed along to the board their ideas and suggestions, and encouraged their churches to make land available for consideration as a suitable site for the project. This action must have had some influence on the board, because it was soon thereafter that the decision was made that if the project was ever going to become a reality, a person was needed who could spend more time on the details necessary to accomplish this goal. Members of the Board of Trustees had given time and energy to becoming educated about the retirement industry and trends of the times as they related to the elderly. They had attended workshops on administration and construction of retirement homes and consulted with organizations and groups regarding procedures and funding. But now they needed someone to devote some time to details, and once again money was a key issue. A committee composed of the Rev. Edwin Alcorn, Mrs. J. L. (Carolyn) Abernethy and Mr. R. Walker Geitner was formed to find a person who would serve as an executive secretary. There are those who said, "If God didn't have a hand in this project up to this point, it was evident God opened doors that now made things much clearer concerning the future," for at a meeting on Sept. 16, 1964, Mr. Frank L. Clapp of Newton, N.C., was presented as a person who was willing to serve as executive secretary of United Church Retirement Home! He offered his services on a volunteer basis, with only his expenses to be paid. As a retired public school teacher, financial planner and dedicated churchman, he was an answer to prayer. The board unanimously accepted Mr. Clapp's offer and expressed their appreciation for his generosity. They pledged their support as they worked together to accomplish the proposed goal. This goal was a milestone towards the dream of bringing into being a first-class retirement home in Southern Synod. One of the first things Mr. Clapp was asked to do was to review the various properties that had been offered as possible locations and report his findings to the board so appropriate action could be taken and proper follow-up carried out. He was asked to give priority to reviewing a property in Thomasville, N.C., which had come to be referred to as "the Sink property."

In order for Mr. Clapp to feel more comfortable in his challenging role, he set up a meeting with the superintendent of the Lutheran Home for the Aged in Hickory, N.C., to talk about what procedures he should follow, and to familiarize himself with a project already in operation within the bounds of the territory where the United Church was considering such an undertaking. As a result of this visit, he reported that the following items should occupy his time and that of the Board of Trustees in the immediate future as their planning continued:

1. Make a survey of the church membership to determine how many aged persons need such a home.
2. Determine the number of persons from the churches who are now living in retirement homes.
3. Determine the number of persons in the churches over the age of 65 who need nursing care.
4. Concentrate on ways of raising needed funds for the establishment and construction of a retirement home.

As word was communicated that Mr. Clapp had accepted the challenge of serving as executive secretary for UCRH, interest in the project picked up, and there was a great deal more optimism among the churches. The Board of Trustees broadened its representation by inviting persons from the Congregational Christian Churches and Convention of the South to meet with them and to become involved in the planning. Consideration was no longer being given to locating a home either at Nazareth Children's Home or Elon Children's Home, but rather at a location where it could be a fresh start supported by all of the congregations that would make up the Southern Conference.

Mr. Clapp, being from Newton, was well acquainted with Julius W. Abernethy, Sr., "philanthropist, industrialist, and trader." Therefore he was pleased when "Uncle Jule," as he was fondly known, contacted him on Oct. 20, 1964, and invited him to visit and speak with him and his wife, Maye Morrison Abernethy, about the proposal to construct a retirement home within the bounds of what had been known as the Southern Synod. Mr. Clapp took the site committee, composed of Rev. Edwin Alcorn, Rev. Wayne Fouts, Mrs. Porter (Marie) Seiwel and Mr. Jack H. Faw, with him to visit the Abernethys on Oct. 29. After listening to the thoughts and dreams of the Board of Trustees regarding their dream for a retirement home, Mr. and Mrs. Abernethy made the following proposal:

- "that they would like to donate the Morrison home place, consisting of a nine-room house and ninety to one hundred acres of land, located on Highway 16 south of Newton, N.C.
- that they would like to give \$200,000 in addition to the house and land,
- that they would have the house and land appraised, and if the value was under \$100,000 they would add enough money to reach that amount,
- that they would assist in raising an additional \$100,000 in the Newton area,
- that they would make this offer with the stipulation that Southern Synod match the \$200,000 gift, and
- that they would ask that Catawba College be named Escrow Agent and Beneficiary with regard to their gift in the event the retirement home should fail to materialize."

Needless to say, when the details of the offer were presented to the Board of Trustees on Dec. 2, 1964, it was enthusiastically accepted, along with the pledged support of the board in following through with the challenge. By April of 1965 the Abernethys were ready to move forward with their offer. While Mr. Clapp and the Board of Trustees were thrilled with the challenge presented to them by the Abernethys, they were soon to be overwhelmed by the work and dedication necessary to meet this amazing challenge. The first step taken was to appoint a Finance Committee to develop plans for raising the matching money and for getting the approval of the Synod to accept the generous gift of the Abernethys and to engage in a capital funds campaign among the churches to raise the needed \$200,000 by the end of 1966. The Finance Committee appointed by the chairman of the Board of Trustees, Rev. Lawrence Leonard, consisted of Mr. R. Walker Geitner, Chair, Rev. G. Melvin Palmer, Mr. Vernon E. Lewis, Mrs. John Miles (Carolyn) Abernethy, Mrs. Joe (Marguerite) Leonard, Dr. John Kernodle and Mr. Frank L. Clapp.

Even though the Synod had many pressing issues facing it at this time in its history, it approved the recommendations for accepting the gift, coupled with the challenge, and supported the proposal for a capital funds campaign. With the support of Synod, the Board of Trustees thought it safe to engage an architect to prepare some preliminary plans so that it would have some more graphic ideas for use in a brochure necessary for the capital funds campaign. Mr. Vernon Lewis, AIA, a member of the Board of Trustees and a

person very much interested in the project, was asked to begin giving thought to what a retirement home might look like on the property in Newton, to be donated by the Abernethys. He immediately began to give this serious thought, and presented his first conceptual drawings for a retirement home at a meeting held at Trinity Church, Conover, N.C. on May 23, 1966. Mr. J. W. Abernethy, Sr. and his wife, Maye, were present for this meeting, and after seeing the dedication and seriousness of the members of the Board of Trustees, offered to raise their initial matching challenge to \$250,000! Mr. Abernethy spoke further about ways in which the board might go about raising the matching monies, suggesting that churches could be challenged to consider pledging ten percent of the value of their church buildings to this project.

The Finance Committee began to make plans for conducting a successful capital funds campaign. Serious thought was given to employing a professional fundraiser, but the decision was made that individuals and churches might be more responsive, and feel better about the effort, if someone whom they knew and respected headed up the campaign. At a special meeting of the Board of Trustees on July 26, 1966, the Finance Committee reported that they had met with the Rev. Roy E. Leinbach, Jr., who at that time was pastor of St. Paul's UCC near Startown, N.C., who had agreed to accept the responsibility of conducting a capital funds campaign to raise the funds necessary to meet the matching challenge of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Abernethy, Sr. Rev. Leinbach was introduced to the group as the campaign leader, and he thanked them for the opportunity. Mr. J. W. Abernethy, Sr. was also present for this July meeting, and made the task of Rev. Leinbach even more challenging by announcing that he would now "match all cash donations up to \$500,000." Progress quickly got underway to raise the matching funds. The First National Bank of Catawba County was designated to receive funds on behalf of UCRH, and an independent partnership was formed by members of the Board of Trustees for the purpose of "receiving and holding stock and other real property on behalf of UCRH." The partnership was to be known as Ayofaw Company, and was formed by Mrs. John Miles (Carolyn) Abernethy (A), Mr. Yorke Peeler (Yo), and Mr. Jack Faw (Faw).

On Sept. 2, 1966, ministers and key laypersons from the Southern Synod were invited to a dinner meeting at Catawba College, where the challenge of establishing a retirement home on land donated by Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Abernethy, Sr. was explained. Thirty-five persons from across the Synod attended the dinner and became part of a history-making event when the architect, Mr. Lewis, presented tentative drawings for a retirement home with space "for forty guests and seven to fourteen patients in an infirmary." The surprise of the evening at this dinner meeting was when J.W. Abernethy spoke to the group, and instead of repeating his former, already publicized challenge, told the group that his family "would match dollar for dollar whatever amount was raised." He further said "We need to raise all of the money we can so as to build more than one home." Rev. Leinbach closed the evening by saying "This is the greatest challenge we have ever had to serve others." People left this kickoff dinner for the capital funds campaign confident, perhaps for the first time, that a retirement home in the new Southern Conference would indeed become a reality. Raising the money for such a venture continued to prove more difficult than was expected, however, partly because there were conflicting ideas about what a retirement home should include. Nursing care seemed to be the primary need, but a "home for the aging" seemed to be more practical and achievable. Time and experience would show that it was not possible to reach out to respond adequately to the needs of the elderly without providing in some way for their health care.

The merger of the various judicatories which were to make up the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ became official in 1965. While this provided a much broader base for raising funds for United Church Retirement Home, Inc., it also made things more complicated, since there were now three associations to deal with: Western North Carolina Association, Eastern North Carolina Association, and Eastern Virginia Association. Most of the churches familiar with the plans for a retirement home were located in the Western Association and were former Evangelical and Reformed churches, but the major portion of the board would now be elected by the Southern Conference in an annual meeting, and would be representative of the whole conference. The size of the board was expanded, and effort was made to be sure there were clergy and lay men and women representing the various areas. The Southern Conference, realizing the extent of the challenge and the time needed to educate the church regarding the importance of this project, extended the allotted time for the capital funds campaign to December 1969.

By Oct. 29, 1969, the Campaign Committee reported that \$255,232 had been raised through the churches in contributions and pledges, and the Abernethy family had contributed \$227,214, for a total of \$519,969. This fell far short of the expectations of those dedicated to making this dream a reality, but it was enough

to give them courage to continue their efforts. On June 17, 1969, it was reported that Mr. and Mrs. Abernethy had transferred the property and the architect had presented working drawings for the first building, which was planned and designed for forty-eight residents, four wings of ten rooms each and an eight-room clinic. Bids for the building, from a select group of contractors, were received on March 5, 1970, in the Fellowship Hall of Grace Reformed UCC in Newton. There were nine general contractors bidding, with a low bid of \$1,022,113. The contract was awarded to Herman Sipe Construction Co. of Conover, N.C., and by the spring meeting of Southern Conference it was reported that "the grading was well underway and the footers were poured for the building." A Plans and Construction Committee, composed of Mr. Jack Faw, chair, Rev. Wayne Fouts, Mr. Willie Everhart and Mrs. J. W. (Maye) Abernethy, Sr., along with the architect, was responsible for monitoring the construction process.

As construction of the building proceeded, it was discovered that the necessary arrangements to get equipment into the proposed sewer plant to be constructed on the creek running through the property had not been made. Negotiations were immediately entered into with the adjoining property owner on the south side of the site, Mr. Seth Yount, to run a road between the two properties back to the proposed sewer plant, a road which could be jointly used. The negotiations were successful, and the road was constructed, which also gave an alternative entrance into the property being developed by United Church Retirement Home.

With the building underway, it was time to think about employing a "manager" for the project. The responsibility for seeking such a person was delegated to a committee chaired by Roy E. Leinbach, Jr., and Jack Faw, Frank L. Clapp, Yorke Peeler, and Carolyn Abernethy. This committee began its search, but was somewhat limited in persons they were able to challenge because the board had instructed them to hire a manager and set up an office for an amount not to exceed \$18,000.

Construction of the building proceeded almost on schedule, and by Sept. 1, 1970, when the building was about 30 percent complete, a special meeting of the board was called to talk once again about finances. There was a lot of uneasiness on the part of a number of board members because of the "failure to raise the funds" needed for the project. Churches were sent an urgent plea to put the retirement home in their budgets, and plans were made once again to ask the Southern Conference for permission to conduct "an all out two year financial campaign" to be handled by an outside professional fundraiser. At this meeting it was again suggested that the name of the corporation be changed to Retirement Nursing Home as a way of increasing interest in the venture and perhaps as a means for increasing financial support. This suggestion was not seriously considered, but it gave evidence of the continuing ambivalence about the project. At this time it proved helpful to have key community leaders on the Board of Trustees, because Mr. R. Walker Geitner, the Chief Executive Officer of First National Bank, reported that, to ease the financial situation, the bank would be willing to loan up to \$400,000 towards the completion of construction and to later reappraise the situation regarding additional funds. The result of this meeting helped keep things on track, and the completion date for the building was set for midsummer of 1971. For the first time since construction was begun, it was comfortable to talk about broadening the dream and developing a master plan for the "full use of the property." As part of that plan, the manor house that was on the property, the home place of Maye Morrison Abernethy, was to be preserved and designated as "Morrison Hall" in memory of Maye's parents, William A. and Juanita W. Morrison.

The next step in the process was to employ capable staff. Several candidates for "manager/administrator" were interviewed, and almost as at other times throughout the process, the Holy Spirit seemed to be leading the development of events. A young man by the name of Rev. C. Philip Laucks appeared on the scene. He lacked experience in the retirement/nursing home industry, but he had a business background and was enthusiastic about the possibilities of this venture. He came to the meeting on Dec. 1, 1970, with the chairman of the Search Committee, Rev. Leinbach, well prepared and ready to present a plan of procedure for staffing the home and beginning to admit residents. The board supported the recommendation of the committee, and Rev. Philip Laucks became the first paid full-time staff person at United Church Retirement Home. He moved to Newton, with his relatively new bride, Barbara. Both of them were ordained United Church of Christ ministers and 1968 graduates of Princeton Theological Seminary. They had served one parish before Rev. Laucks accepted the call to UCRH. Soon after they moved to the Newton area, Barbara became minister of Christian Education at Corinth United Church of Christ in Hickory.

Rev. Laucks, at his first meeting with the Board of Trustees, raised the question for discussion that had haunted them from the beginning: "What provisions were they going to make for nursing care?" The board

expressed its continuing feeling that they were not yet ready to venture into the nursing area, and restated their plan that for the present time this was to be a retirement facility only. They did, however, instruct Rev. Laucks "to consult with other agencies and institutions through which nursing care might be provided for residents for whom it became necessary." They also approved a plan for him to visit a number of sister retirement homes and participate in an internship program at Phoebe-Devitt Home in Allentown, Penn. in order to learn more about how to help make UCRH of the Southern Conference "the finest possible facility, offering exceptional care to its residents." Rev. Laucks was also to begin the process of becoming a licensed nursing home administrator recognized and certified by the state of North Carolina, so that when the time came for nursing care to be provided by UCRH, he would be properly licensed.

As plans were developed for a possible capital funds campaign to be conducted by a professional fundraiser, and Rev. Laucks assumed more and more responsibility for the development and operations of the home, Mr. Clapp, who had been serving as executive secretary on a volunteer basis, submitted his letter of resignation on March 22, 1971. It was accepted with "regret and appreciation" for all that he had done to help the home become a reality.

It was imperative that additional funds be raised in order to complete the construction of the building, purchase necessary furnishings, and be able to pay the bills for daily operations. Ketchum, Inc., a professional fundraising company, was employed early in 1971 to make a survey of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ and determine the possibility of raising as much as \$1 million for this project. Ketchum interviewed thirty-six ministers and twenty-four laypersons across the conference to determine the feasibility of another campaign. Based on their findings, they were engaged to conduct a limited campaign at a cost of \$25,000. At a meeting on March 22, 1971, the plans for the financial campaign were finalized, with a challenge of \$1.50 set for "the man in the pew," and a figure of \$5,000 established as a memorial or gift of honor for one room of the facility. This campaign met with limited success, with contributions amounting to approximately \$300,000. Over \$800,000 was still needed to complete construction and put affairs in order so that residents could be admitted by the projected date of opening, which had been set for Aug. 9, 1971. As had always been the case, the project continued to proceed on faith, and funds were made available in order that construction could be completed. Mr. R. Walker Geitner, president of First National Bank and a member of the UCRH Board, arranged for an additional loan of \$400,000, and J. W. Abernethy contributed another \$100,000. Revs. Harold Myers and Melvin Palmer, who had served as campaign chairs, were asked to complete all the necessary follow-up of the campaign after Ketchum was released since the new administrator was involved in getting ready to open the facility. Rev. Laucks sought every opportunity to secure licensure from the state of North Carolina for an extended nursing care institution, but found it could not be done under the present rules of the state. He led the board "to continue to request licensure from the Department of Social Services, pledging to pursue nursing care within one to three years, and to begin aligning with skilled nursing care facilities so that residents could be assured of a place to go if they needed to receive quality nursing care."

As plans proceeded to open the facility by August 1971, it was discovered that furnishings could be purchased at considerable savings from area manufacturing companies rather than from the American Hospital Supply Co., as had been previously proposed. Effort was made by J. W. Abernethy to obtain the necessary hospital beds through North Carolina Baptist Hospital, and additional savings were realized by having the county agent, Mr. Jesse Giles, prepare the landscaping plan rather than going to a landscape architect. Everything now seemed to be falling into place for the August opening. By June the administrator reported that four applicants had been approved for residency and fifty-two requests had been received. As these applications were reviewed, it was called to the attention of the board that there was a large number of persons needing this type of living arrangement who could not afford the established fees of \$480 per month for a private room or \$250 per month for double occupancy. As this challenge was faced, action was taken on June 14, 1971, to create "a Supplementary Assistance Fund with monies received from memorials, special offerings in local churches, and from business firms" to help provide funds for persons desiring retirement home living who could not afford the fee. A goal of \$4,200 was set for the first year in order to make it possible "to support indigent persons up to one-tenth of the residents of the home."

Up until now, Rev. Laucks had employed only one staff person besides himself to carry on the work of this project, a bookkeeper-secretary in the person of Mrs. Annie Hass. Now as one challenge after another was faced successfully, a competent staff to operate the facility was employed to report to work by the first week in July.

The first staff persons employed were:

Director of Plant Operations — Dewey H. Welch

Director of Dietary Services — Elizabeth Harbinson

Director of Special Services — Gail Allen, who was to live in and help provide twenty-four hour coverage

Assistant to the Administrator and Coordinator of Health Services — Frances Reinhardt

The first five residents were admitted early in August 1971 and the facility was formally dedicated on Oct. 31, 1971, with a wonderful celebration, where Rev. Hobart Birch, from the Council of Health and Welfare of the United Church was present and Rev. Dr. James H. Lightbourne was the dedicatory speaker. As Dr. Robert Keppel, a local surgeon and member of Corinth UCC, sang "Bless This House," emotions ran high as this new facility was dedicated, and faith in the dream of a growing ministry among older adults was renewed.

If this new facility was to operate and properly meet its daily financial obligations, it was necessary to increase the number of residents as quickly as possible. Two of the four wings of the facility were converted to semi-private rooms to increase the capacity from forty eight to sixty eight residents. Applications were slow coming in, and in order to encourage more applications, the \$1,000 "Accommodation Fee" which had been formerly set for residents to pay up front was withdrawn. This seemed to make a difference, and by December of 1971, forty additional applications had been received, and twenty-one residents had been admitted. One of the surprising things to all concerned was that the average age of the residents being admitted was 80, when everyone had expected it to be much lower. This average age made it more critical than ever for nursing services to be available at the facility. The board took action "to convert a portion of the existing facilities in order to provide nursing care in the immediate future," and they instructed the administrator "to provide nursing and other services as required."

Attention now turned from constructing a building to providing a meaningful, quality program. Events began to occur in rapid fire order. Early in 1972 a letter was received from the U. S. Internal Revenue Department stating that "United Church Retirement Home, Inc., was given tax exempt status," and the Department of Social Services of Catawba County made some assistance available for indigent persons and began to recommend placement of persons in the facility. In response to the board action regarding nursing services, Mrs. Elizabeth Goodin was employed as Director of Nursing Services and was charged with the responsibility of helping to intensify the effort to acquire some licensed nursing beds. By September of 1972 the board approved that three of the five wings of the facility be converted to nursing care at a conversion cost of \$22,600. With this conversion and the report that Rev. Laucks "had been approved and certified as a Nursing Home Administrator" the possibility of the home being licensed for nursing care was much greater. Recognizing that most of the support that the administration needed at this point was related to daily operations, the board gave consideration to organizing a local committee "to help guide and support the administrator" rather than calling on the entire board, whose members were scattered across the Conference.

After one year of operation, problems and challenges related to programming and administration seemed to be mounting, so it was decided to seek the help of a consultant. Mr. Robert Murtha, from First Community Village of Columbus, Ohio, was asked to survey the plans, dreams and operations of UCRH and to make appropriate recommendations regarding how to strengthen the program. He was very knowledgeable in how retirement facilities should operate in order to be self-sustaining, as well as knowing what programs needed to be put in place to attract residents and to minister to their needs. Many positive steps were taken by the board in response to the recommendations of the consultant.

Some of these were:

1. The organization of a committee, known as the Newton Operational Advisory Committee, to give guidance and support related to daily operations, to the administrator. The first committee was appointed by the board on Feb. 28, 1973, and consisted of the following persons:

Rev. Roy E. Leinbach, Jr. — Board Member

Mr. Manley Fuller — Board Member

Mrs. Edith Grimes — Board Member

Mrs. Prue Jones — Local Community

Mr. Frank L. Clapp — Local Community

Mr. H. Jack Faw — Local Community

Mr. Adrian L. Shuford, Jr. — Local Community

Mr. Claude S. Abernethy, Jr. — Local Community

Mrs. John M. (Carolyn) Abernethy — Board Member

2.The creation of "three separate funds."

- A Capital Fund for collecting monies to be used for capital expansion.
- A Sustaining Fund to encourage gifts to help persons who needed services they could not afford.
- An Operating Fund which would provide the necessary monies for daily operations of the home.

3.The establishment of an Entrance Fee or Founder's Fee of \$1,000 to provide for processing of applicants and to provide some money to help eliminate the \$600,000 mortgage on the property. There had been a \$1,000 Accommodation Fee when the facility opened, which had been eliminated to encourage applications.

4.Working towards Medicare certification so that those persons eligible for this government program could be served.

It had been hoped that once the home was constructed and in full operation, more persons would catch the vision and contributions to the needed funds would be easier to generate. This was not the case, and the need for funds continued to occupy the energy of the board. A new fundraising effort was to be undertaken, with Mr. Frank L. Clapp, a well-respected layman from Grace Reformed UCC and former executive secretary of UCRH, as coordinator of the campaign. The campaign was to be known as the New Life Campaign. One of the first contributors was Mrs. Wade (Nora) Shuford of Hickory, who contributed a building lot which was then sold to First National Bank of Catawba County for \$10,000. Fortunately this campaign effort was somewhat more productive than previous efforts had been, so that by February of 1973 it was reported that money received to date was \$248,228, with forty-seven churches making pledges, and gifts from industries amounting to \$31,000. Over the next year the contributions through this campaign reduced the indebtedness of UCRH to a manageable amount of \$395,000.

As UCRH continued to come of age, the administrator and board had to deal with new problems such as an employee complaint to the United States Department of Labor regarding paying practices, based on discrimination because of gender, which was successfully settled for a payment of \$3,700. Another complaint made by a resident's family was made to the State Department of Health regarding the allegation of mishandling of drugs. This complaint was dismissed, with the department issuing a letter stating that "there was no evidence of misuse," and commending the home for having an "exceptional operation".

The celebration of the realization of a dream reached a new level on the occasion of the second anniversary held on Sunday, Oct. 28, 1973, when church and community persons, staff and residents gathered for a service where the Rev. Carrol J. Olm from Fairhaven Retirement Community of Whitewater, Wis., spoke on the theme: "Alternatives to the Institutionalization of the Aging." During this anniversary celebration the challenge was laid out for the board to "consider further development of the home." So in March 1974, the decision was made to engage a competent architect and to seek the necessary funding and approval for appropriate renovations of the present building and the construction of an addition to the building to provide skilled and intermediate nursing services.

The process to make this new dream a reality began. Mr. Wayland Plaster, AIA, was engaged as architect for the project, and a Certificate of Need application was made to the state of North Carolina, which was successful. The Certificate of Need was for thirty skilled nursing beds and forty intermediate beds. To finance the needed construction, the board looked to issuing first mortgage bonds in the amount of \$750,000, but new doors opened. The Farmers Home Administration made available an insured loan of \$770,000 at five percent interest for a period of forty years. What a wonderful opportunity UCRH now had to broaden its ministry! This loan provided \$400,000 for a new nursing wing and the necessary renovation to the existing building to accommodate forty Intermediate Care Facility beds. This left \$370,000 for use towards the indebtedness on the original building. Operationally the home could now be self-sustaining at such time as a 95 percent occupancy level was reached and maintained. Bids were received for this project of expansion and renovation on Oct. 28, 1975, which marked another milestone in the development of a viable retirement home for the older adults of Southern Conference of the UCC, because now two levels of nursing services would be available, as well as retirement living.

Rev. Lawrence A. Leonard had served as president of this new venture from the time it was only a dream. He had insisted that it be a "top of the line, first rate" project, and had resisted any decisions that would have diminished that goal. He had been discouraged many times during the development stage, primarily because of the lack of support from colleagues. As the plans now got underway for this new addition and the provision of licensed nursing services, he was convinced that his dream had been realized and he

could turn the leadership over to other persons. New leaders were elected on March 26, 1974, and Rev. Leonard was given special recognition. He was presented with a plaque which read:

"In recognition and appreciation of his vision, untiring efforts, selflessness, and generosity in helping to establish a retirement home for the aging members of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ and others. As the first President — 1957-1974 — his leadership and devotion have set a precedent that will enable those who follow to continue his high standards and ideals for posterity. May he be blessed with many years of active service."

He was also elected as Director Emeritus of the Board at this meeting.

The newly elected officers were:

President — Rev. John W. Settlemyre

Vice President — Mr. Claude Abernethy, Jr.

Treasurer — Mr. R. Walker Geitner

Secretary — Rev. Roy E. Leinbach, Jr.

At this same meeting Mr. J. W. Abernethy, Sr. and Mrs. Maye Morrison Abernethy were named Honorary Life Members of the Board of Directors and publicly recognized as major benefactors of UCRH.



Mr. J. W. Abernethy, Sr.



Mrs. Maye M. Abernethy

This marked the end of one of the major periods in the history of this important ministry. Not only did the board have a new leader at the helm, but it would be only a short time before the Administrator/Executive Director, the Rev. Philip Laucks, would accept the challenge to become the executive director of United Church Retirement Homes of Ohio, a sister institution offering retirement living opportunities to older adults. Rev. Laucks had provided capable and dedicated leadership for UCRH and had enabled a wonderful dream to be realized. He had gained a lot of first-hand experience as he helped bring UCRH into being, and was now ready for a new challenge. His

resignation was accepted on June 27, 1976, with regret, but UCRH could feel good that they had helped prepare Rev. Laucks for expanded leadership in the wider church family.

Several of the members of the Search Committee that was formed to seek a new Administrator/Executive Director knew of the work of the Rev. Lawrence N. Strunk, who at that time was serving as the Executive Director of Uplands Retirement Center at Pleasant Hill, Tenn. Lawrence was no stranger to the area, since he had served a congregation in Kannapolis, N.C., early in his ministry. He was a licensed Nursing Home Administrator and the committee felt he was the right person to lead the work of UCRH at this time in its history. A contact made by Rev. John Settlemyre found Rev. Strunk to be interested. How fortunate for UCRH that he was able to accept the position and come to Newton in September 1976, picking up where Rev. Laucks left off without any loss in momentum. Rev. Strunk's style of leadership complemented the needs of UCRH as it was ready to grow and mature. He molded the staff together into a working community, and had the skills to oversee the completion of the construction of the new nursing wing and place it in operation. This new F-Wing was dedicated on Aug. 14, 1977, and by mid-1978 was 90 percent occupied. By the end of the year the facility began to operate in the black for the first time! Many accolades were being passed along that helped shape the reputation of UCRH as the best nursing facility/retirement home in the area. The state inspector who gave final approval of the construction and renovation for the Certificate of Need for the nursing home beds is quoted as saying: "I have never seen any other facility with such a dedicated staff as UCRH." The team inspecting for licensing the nursing beds began to direct other facilities to UCRH to help them organize their nursing staffs. The team said, "See Mr. Larry Sink, RN, Director of Nursing at UCRH, about operating a nursing staff." As the result of this recommendation, it wasn't long before a hospital and two nursing homes in the area sought help from Mr. Sink, who had served as Director of Nursing at UCRH since 1974.

Rev. Strunk came to UCRH with the vision and goal of helping to mold the Newton facility into a full-service retirement community and to broaden the ministry by planning for "satellite" units in other areas of the Southern Conference. He was supported in this vision by the Board of Directors, as well as by Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Abernethy, Sr., who from the very beginning dreamed of more than one facility operated by UCRH.

New horizons for the vision were opened when early in 1976, soon after Rev. Strunk became administrator/executive director, it publicly revealed that Mrs. Anise Shuler, a member of Emanuel UCC in Thomasville, N.C., "had bequeathed to UCRH a 47-acre tract of land located just south of Thomasville."

Ground and aerial surveys were made of the property, and it was decided to seriously consider using it for a Davidson County "satellite" of UCRH. This decision prompted the board to officially name the Newton facility "the J. W. Abernethy Unit of United Church Retirement Home, Inc.," and thus it soon became known as the J. W. Abernethy Center. This action changed the character of the UCRH corporation, and Rev. Strunk, who had been known primarily as administrator of the UCRH at Newton, now became executive director of the corporation and acting administrator of the J. W. Abernethy Center.

Rev. Linn H. Finger, who had been serving as chaplain, was named assistant administrator to help set the executive director free to dedicate more time to expanding the ministry into new areas.



Installation of Rev. Linn Finger as Chaplain, Abernethy Center, 1975. Left to right, Philip Laucks, Administrator; John Settenmyre, President of Board of Directors; Edwin M. Alcorn, Associate Conference Minister; Sterling Whitener, Social Work Consultant and Linn Finger, Chaplain.

The year 1978 was a "good news — bad news" year. In the fall of 1978 Mrs. Elizabeth Harbinson, who was serving as the Director of Dietary at the J. W. Abernethy Center, was killed in an automobile accident at the corner of N.C. Highway 16 South and Claremont Road (Rural Road 1801). The Highway Department agreed, as a result of this accident, to reroute Rural Road 1801, and remove part of the embankment to enable oncoming traffic to be more visible. The really good news for the center in 1978 was that the City of Newton laid a water line along Highway 16, so that city water was available to J. W. Abernethy Center and could replace the water system originally contributed by Mr. Jack Faw of Well Drillers Service, Inc. The availability of city water improved the fire protection of the center and enabled it to seriously plan for a variety of

independent living units on the campus. A master plan for roads and utilities was prepared for the center by Coulter Associates, Inc. of Asheville, N.C., with approval of the plans by the board. Construction got underway and plans were made to build a variety of independent living units. Roger Isaac Construction Co. was issued a contract for \$129,244 to construct one cottage and one duplex. The cottage was constructed with gifts in memory of Myrtle Smyre Rowe, and dedicated on Aug. 16, 1981, and a duplex was built with gifts in memory of Lura Abernethy Rader and dedicated on Feb. 1, 1981. A more detailed long-range plan of the eighty four acres of the J. W. Abernethy Center was prepared in 1982 by Neuman, Calloway, Johnson, and Winfree, architects of Winston-Salem, N.C. This plan was followed as the village now began to take shape and expand. Most of the individual apartments and free-standing units were designed by Reinhardt and Smith, architects from Newton, and many were built as residents paid the cost of the construction, so that UCRH did not need to go into debt in order to get the village underway.

Plans for a retirement center in Davidson County on the Anise Shuler property kicked into gear in the late 1970s, and in anticipation of this dream becoming a reality, the Southern Conference of the UCC once again approved the mounting of a capital campaign to be conducted among the churches in 1981 to raise \$500,000 over a three-year period for this purpose. To help with this campaign, the Rev. Donald P. Flick, of Hagerstown, Md., was employed as Administrative Assistant to Rev. Strunk. Rev. Flick had worked part time as Director of Development at Uplands Retirement Center in Tennessee and as Associate Executive Director of Homewood Retirement Corp. with headquarters in Williamsport, Md. He, too, was no stranger to North Carolina since he had married Jo Anne Townsend of Hickory, and in 1963 they had successfully organized Church of the Master in the St. Stephen's area of that city. Rev. Strunk introduced him to the board at their 1980 September meeting, and he began working with UCRH in late October of that year. A feasibility study showed that the Shuler property was an excellent location for a retirement center. A Certificate of Need application was prepared and submitted to the State Department of Facility Services

for a Continuing Care Retirement Community to be located on Kendall Mill Road in Thomasville. At the time the application for a Certificate of Need was submitted, there was a moratorium on nursing home beds. A CCRC, however, could obtain one nursing bed for every five independent units, to be known as Life Care beds and available for use only to persons residing at the center. This application was given final approval by the state in 1983.

As plans were laid for the 1981 capital funds campaign among the churches of Southern Conference for this new retirement community to be known as Piedmont Center, the Eastern Virginia Association was in the process of appointing a committee to investigate the possibility of establishing a retirement community in that area.

Those named to that committee in the fall of 1978 by the Eastern Virginia Association, were:

Dr. R. Leroy Howell, Suffolk, Va
Mr. Jack Nurney, Jr., Suffolk, Va
Mr. Thomas R. Jones, Suffolk, Va
Mr. E. C. Copeland, Suffolk, Va
Rev. Daniel Bowers of Chester, Va, President of the Association
Rev. Bill Simmons of Chesapeake, Va, Associate Conference Minister of the Eastern Virginia Association

Mr. Walter Seely, Sr., Waverly, Va
Mrs. James A. Rawles, Richmond, Va
Mr. Willard Broun, Jr., Suffolk, Va
Mrs. Mary Carter, Holland, Va

There were members from the Eastern Virginia Association on the UCRH Board of Directors at the time, who had been elected by the Southern Conference. At a meeting in September 1979, Mrs. Eunice Moore, one of the board members from Eastern Virginia, petitioned the board to appoint an Eastern Virginia Operational Advisory Committee to work closely with the Eastern Virginia Association in determining the possibility of locating a retirement community in Eastern Virginia. Such a committee was organized, with the original study group being asked to be an integral part of this Advisory Committee, and with the associate conference minister being invited as an ex-officio member of the UCRH Board. This new component thrown into the mix tended to complicate the financial campaign already underway. As the campaign proceeded, churches and individuals were instructed to designate their contributions or pledges for Virginia, Piedmont or Abernethy Centers if they so chose. It became clearer than ever that UCRH was indeed a corporation with a vision of establishing ministry among older adults beyond the work of the J.W. Abernethy Center.

All of this activity seemed to mandate the need for a corporate office outside the walls of the existing center. A study was undertaken to determine how the Morrison house, located on the property of the J.W. Abernethy Center, could be put to use for this purpose. Maye Morrison Abernethy was approached, since her husband had died on May 9, 1978, concerning her interest in helping with such a venture. She agreed to fund the renovation of this structure, which was to become the Morrison Headquarters of UCRH. As plans got underway for the renovation, it was discovered that the building had been seriously infested with termites and it was not feasible to consider remodeling. Conversations with Mrs. Abernethy regarding this situation revealed that if the building were to be demolished and reconstructed at the same location and as closely resembling the original house as was possible, she would finance the project. Architect William Reinhardt of Newton undertook the task, and even measured the size of the outside boards to make sure the reconstruction would be consistent with the benefactor's wishes. The building was demolished with the exception of the front porch, which enabled the architect to maintain the building's original character. Persons who passed by the site and were familiar with the original house found it hard to believe that the structure had been razed and rebuilt, since it looked so much like the original farmhouse. While it was disappointing to have to demolish the original structure, it did give the architect leeway to plan the inside design of the building to be compatible with the needs of a corporate office. It also enabled the addition of a fireproof stairway to permit occupancy upstairs as well as other complimentary features for this exciting and expanding ministry. Five offices were planned for the first floor, along with a very fine conference room. On the second floor were three guest rooms and an apartment for a hostess. The basement provided ample clean storage for historical records. The construction of this corporate headquarters was completed in the fall of 1981 at a cost of approximately \$225,000. It was dedicated on Nov. 21, 1981. Mrs. Abernethy was present for the dedication service, and was quite pleased that this house would stand in memory of her parents and as the headquarters of an amazing and wonderful ministry in which she and her husband had such an important role. The plaque on the wall of this corporate office reads:



TO ONE WHOSE FORESIGHT MADE
POSSIBLE A HEADQUARTERS FOR
THE UNITED CHURCH RETIREMENT HOMES, INC.
WE DEDICATE
THIS MORRISON BUILDING
TO
MAYE MORRISON ABERNETHY
NOVEMBER 1981
LAWRENCE STRUNK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NEWTON OPERATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

As the ministry of UCRH continued to expand, those responsible for its work were improving their skills and sharing their knowledge. At the 1980 annual meeting of the Council for Health and Human Services of the United Church of Christ, Mr. Larry Sink, Director of Nursing Services at Abernethy Center since 1974, received the "Employee of the Year Award." Rev. Donald P. Flick, Administrative Assistant, received his doctoral degree from Lancaster Theological Seminary at the May 1981 graduation exercises, having completed his dissertation on the subject "Ministry of the Elderly: A Process to Help Strengthen the Local Church Through Intentional Planning Designed to Involve the Elderly in Creative Ministry." This research by Dr. Flick sharpened his planning skills, equipping him to engage the UCRH staff in some extensive long-range planning. Planning seminars were held throughout the summer of 1981, resulting in resolutions being adopted by the board related not only to Abernethy Center but for the establishment of a center in Davidson County, N.C. and in the Eastern Virginia Association. This began a planning process that has always been characteristic of UCRH. As board members participated in this style of administration they understood it to be important for all who were concerned about the future of UCRH:

- "to plan so we can avoid making as many mistakes as possible.
- to plan so we can make creative calculated decisions which will have positive long-term results.
- to plan so we can move our ministry on behalf of the elderly forward with meaning and in a fashion that is responsible to changing human need."

Early in 1982, Dr. Flick was designated as Director of Research and Development to help implement the resolutions for beginning the work in other areas, although for the present time he continued the responsibility of serving as administrator of the J.W. Abernethy Center. This was done in order to set Rev. Strunk free to shape the corporation in ways that would enable it to meet the many upcoming new challenges of the expanding corporation. One of the new organizational procedures that was put into place was to ask the chairpersons of each of the Operational Advisory Committees to serve as ex-officio members of the board, and to help keep lines of communication open and help coordinate the work in the various areas so that each project would receive appropriate attention. The Conference staff persons were also included as ex-officio members of the board in order to strengthen ties with the church judicatory that helped give birth to this ministry. There was one critical point in 1981 when Conference staff participation was very limited. The board minutes of this year noted that "because of the illness of Dr. Bill Simmons, the hospitalization of Rev. Edwin Alcorn, the death of Rev. Jim Lightbourne, and the pressures of duty of Dr. Clyde Fields and Rev. Ervin Milton, there was no Conference staff person present." This reference is made to emphasize the seriousness with which UCRH has always taken its relationship with the church.

A new area of working with older adults was tested by the staff when, after attending a meeting in Greensboro concerning Housing and Urban Development, an application was filed in 1982 by UCRH for a HUD project on the Piedmont Center land. The application was filed by a newly formed corporation, Piedmont Housing, Inc. The project application was approved, but not funded. The procedure did open up new avenues of funding and service which would take on significance later in the history of UCRH. About the same time word was received that the Piedmont Housing application would not be funded, another challenge came to UCRH from the Ellen Craig Scott Foundation. This foundation owned 100 acres of land and an old manor house in the area of Chapel Hill, N.C. The property was encumbered with a debt of \$300,000 owed to the Reformed Church in America. This property was offered to UCRH for a retirement center in Eastern North Carolina. It was a tempting challenge, but the decision was made at the September 1983 board meeting

that with Piedmont Center about to get underway and serious conversations being held concerning a center in Virginia, it was not a good time to take on additional obligations. This challenge did cause the Board of Directors to state that at a future time, consideration should be given to establishing a center in the eastern part of North Carolina.

With the workload of planning the development of Piedmont Center and a future project in Franklin, Virginia, Rev. Strunk and Dr. Flick found their workload fast becoming more than they were able to manage. Rev. Van D. Grimes was added to the staff on Oct. 1, 1983 as administrative assistant, serving under Dr. Flick in the Administrator in Training program, working towards licensure as a nursing home administrator. He would become Administrator of J.W. Abernethy Center as soon as he met all of the state requirements for licensure. Early in 1985 Rev. Ronald Vaughn, who was previously employed by Frye Hospital in Hickory, was employed to become administrator of Piedmont Center, and he, too, was entered into the administrator in training program. Both men worked under Dr. Flick, who served as their preceptor, and they were enrolled in the administrator's course at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.

Maye Morrison Abernethy, who, along with her husband, J.W., had meant so much to this ministry, died on April 10, 1982, and once again she showed her love and that of her husband for the ministry of UCRH by favoring it in her will. Rev. Strunk had worked closely with Mrs. Abernethy to enable her to see the importance of this ministry through a meaningful bequest. Her husband had often told friends that "helping to establish the UCRH was the finest thing I have ever done," and the J.W. Abernethy Center was constructed on her family farm. When her will was read it left the major portion of her estate and that of her husband to UCRH. Since this bequest was not what was expected by the nieces and nephews of Mrs. Abernethy nor by the children and grandchildren of J.W. Abernethy, the will was contested. A committee was appointed by the UCRH board to work with the attorneys and the family to reach an amenable settlement. The committee consisted of the Rev. Roy E. Leinbach, Jr., chair, Adrian L. Shuford, R. Walker Geitner, Marion Richards, C. Boyce Sink, and Donald P. Flick, the Executive Director as an Ex-officio Member. Legal counsel believed that through time the courts would uphold the will and rule in favor of UCRH. They said it would take many years to work through the court system. UCRH was advised to negotiate a settlement in order to expedite the process and to maintain a meaningful relationship with the Morrison/Abernethy family. With the immediate need for finances to fund an expansion at Abernethy Center and to help underwrite the bond issue for the construction of the Piedmont Center, it seemed in the best interest of everyone to work towards a negotiated settlement rather than working through the courts.

At the Board of Directors meeting on March 26, 1985, Rev. Leinbach reported on the negotiated settlement. He stated the following:

"Some of the money from the bequest will be in a trust fund administered by trustees named in the will. Other funds will come directly to the Corporation and a procedure for the administration and use of said funds will need to be established by the Board. The first step we need to take is to work to get our monies out of a Virginia bank and placed in a local bank."

The amount in the Virginia bank was over \$2 million dollars and was designated for use at the J.W. Abernethy Center.

A summary of the money to be received by UCRH from the bequest included:

(1) approximately \$2 million designated for the J.W. Abernethy Center which was invested in the trust fund in a bank in Richmond, Virginia, (2) money from the Marital Deduction Trust with its use to be determined by UCRH board, and (3) a Maye Morrison Abernethy Testamentary Charitable Trust to be administered by trustees named in the will.

The following agreement was made by the UCRH Board as recommended by the attorneys.

"Whereas the United Church Retirement Home, Inc. wishes to improve its relationship with Catawba College, the Board would not oppose the desire of the Trustees of the Testamentary Trust to make a contribution from the income of said Trust to the College."

"Be it further resolved that we support the desire of the Trustees of the Testamentary Charitable Trust to contribute the sum of approximately \$650,000 to Catawba College in 1985, and would consider supporting an additional amount of money being provided at some point for a cooperative program between the UCRH and Catawba College in seeking new models for ministry among the elderly."

The following was also agreed upon by the board as an additional part of the settlement:

"That UCRH authorize the Newton Operational Advisory Committee to purchase land adjacent to the present site belonging to the Morrison heirs (approximately 74-acres) so that we can more creatively plan for the long-range future of J.W. Abernethy Center; and that the price be set at \$180,000."

The land was part of the original Morrison farm and borders Claremont Road.

The settlement of this estate on March 19 and 20, 1985, even though it represented fewer assets than would probably have been forthcoming had a ruling been made by the courts, provided the security and funds UCRH needed to broaden and pursue its vision at a critical time in its history. When Maye Morrison Abernethy's will was finally settled and the assets distributed, the benefit to UCRH was quite exciting, and placed the corporation in a position for substantial growth.

- From Trust in Richmond bank for J. W. Abernethy Facility \$2,000,000 plus interest
- From Marital Deduction Trust \$8,500,000
- From Maye Morrison Abernethy Testamentary Charitable Trust \$2,070,000 (Corpus +Int.)
- Acquired an additional 74 acres of land for \$184,000 that was adjacent to the J. W. Abernethy Center property.

By the end of 1986 the finances of UCRH had taken a turn from "never having enough to pay our bills" to being in a very stable financial condition thanks to the Maye Morrison Abernethy estate settlement. It was reported on Sept. 22, 1986, following the dedication of the new Piedmont Center, that the cash and investments of the corporation were \$13,728,651 with a long-term debt of only \$7,552,088. It was voted at that time that \$7,000,000 would be placed in an Endowment Fund, to be increased each year by a percentage of the income on an annual basis, and that as good Christian stewards of the resources that had been entrusted to the corporation, 10 percent of the investment income was to be placed in the Benevolent Trust Fund "to help persons whose assets are not sufficient to pay for needed care."

During the time the will of Maye Morrison Abernethy was being settled and plans were seriously underway for the construction of Piedmont Center, the wife of the executive director, Mrs. Edith W. Strunk, was diagnosed with an untreatable brain tumor, and deteriorated rather rapidly. She was a patient in the Clapp-Leinbach Health Care Unit of Abernethy Center, where, as a nurse herself, she had helped train staff and helped keep the nursing home a high quality place for care. About the time of her death in 1983, Rev. Strunk began planning for his retirement. He retired early in 1984, and Dr. Flick was asked to serve as interim executive director. Dr. Flick submitted his application to assume the position, but the Search Committee felt it was appropriate to advertise the position and carry out a series of interviews. The committee received and reviewed over thirty applications for the position. Mr. Adrian Shuford, Jr. was chair of the Search Committee, and was instructed by the President, Mr. Max Bumgarner, to expedite the process since there were so many decisions to be made regarding Piedmont Center and the proposed Eastern Virginia project. The committee worked hard to complete its process and on Sept. 25, 1984, recommended that Dr. Flick be elected as executive director and CEO.

Upon the death of Edith Strunk and the retirement of Rev. Strunk, an Edith W. Strunk Memorial was established by the Strunk family. The income from this fund was to be used to provide those "little extras for persons in the centers who have exhausted their assets and have no one to help support them." Upon the death of Lawrence N. Strunk some years later, Feb. 12, 1996, the corpus of the fund was increased to \$50,000 by the Board of Directors, and the name of the fund was changed to the Strunk Memorial Fund in recognition of the fine contributions of both of these persons to United Church Retirement Homes, Inc.

Soon after Dr. Flick accepted the position of executive director/CEO two new persons were added to the corporate staff, Mr. Benjamin Hosaflook as director of finance (1984), and Mr. C. Shuford Abernethy, III, as director of research and development (1986). The job description of the Director of Research and Development stated that "this person shall be responsible for communicating the work of UCRH to our constituency and raising funds, some of which can be made available to provide services to the elderly whose needs exceed their assets."

As the corporation grew it became more and more important to help those elected to the Board of Directors of this now multi-million dollar ministry to understand their responsibilities. Reference notebooks were prepared for each board member and presented at a meeting on Sept. 22, 1986, which included updated Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and a Manual of Duties, which were all reviewed and prepared by a special committee chaired by Mrs. Jolene Bray of Burlington, N.C. Along with these items each member was presented with a copy of the book, *Volunteer Leaders Manual*, printed and distributed by the American Association of Homes for the Aging. (AAHA)

The plans for Piedmont Center were progressing with all of the various negotiations for zoning, utilities, construction and financing falling into place. Arrangements were made through the Medical Care Commission of North Carolina to sell tax-exempt bonds to finance construction. The center was dedicated on Sept. 21, 1986, with Rev. D. Russell Myers assuming the responsibilities of administrator. Ronald Vaughn, who was originally hired for this position, made the decision not to move from the Hickory area to the Thomasville area. By Oct. 6th of that year, when Rev. Myers made his first official report, there were twenty-four residents living in Independent Living Units and thirteen persons in the Health Care Unit.

About the time Piedmont Center opened, North Carolina was becoming one of the Southern states attracting a lot of retirees. A number of nonprofit retirement communities were being built, and the various counties as well as the state began to raise the question regarding ad valorem taxation. The Moravian Retirement Center in Winston-Salem became a test case, and all of the other church related facilities in North Carolina joined forces to help those pressing the issue to understand the importance of nonprofit retirement facilities remaining tax-exempt. The case was won in the courts during the late 80s, and legislation was passed in Raleigh to maintain the tax-exempt status of church-related facilities, but the issue was far from settled. The idea continues to be raised, and the nonprofit retirement communities must always be ready to show how they respond to the needs of the community if they are to maintain their tax-exempt status. It was in an effort to demonstrate why UCRH should maintain its tax-exempt status that a Social Accountability document was prepared demonstrating the work within the wider community that is carried on by UCRH because it is a not-for-profit 501-C-3 corporation. A report was prepared by Dr. Flick, who was serving at that time as president of the North Carolina Nonprofit Homes Association, to show the importance of nonprofit institutions to the health care/retirement industry and why they should remain tax-exempt. This report was placed in the hands of those responsible for making the case for the various nonprofit facilities of the state.



*Rev. Russell Myers,
first Administrator of
Piedmont Center*

Pressures brought on by the expansion and growth of the retirement industry were beginning to precipitate some rather significant organizational and programmatic changes. These changes were hastened along by the state of North Carolina issuing rules and regulations related to Continuing Care Retirement Communities. As the state laws took shape, UCRH was in the forefront of helping to shape policy because several documents such as the Use For Life Agreement (Resident Contract) and Policies and Procedures for Independent Living were unique to UCRH. They had been formulated and designed as the need arose, with few examples to be copied, but were now readily shared with the state as they quickly began to regulate the industry. By late 1988 the state required what became known as a Disclosure Statement to be filed on an annual basis by all licensed CCRCs. This procedure was not unique to North Carolina, but it helped standardize the retirement industry in the state. The Disclosure Statement revealed much about each retirement community including such things as rates and documents required for entrance into the various levels of retirement living and was available to the public. UCRH had to make some adjustments in its documents to comply with the new rules, but for the most part state requirements were rather easily met since UCRH had helped to set the standards. While making these adjustments in February of 1988, some other rather significant issues were faced, and things became more formalized. One major area of concern was to put in place a more creative approach to employee relations. The board recognized that its first priority obligation was to the residents, but that it must also see its relationship with employees as ministry. In the nursing home area, the ratio of residents to employees was almost one to one, so there had to be concern for responding to the needs of persons who cared for the residents on a day-to-day basis and a way to encourage persons to enter this special field of service. A scholarship fund for employees was established in 1988 with a \$20,000 corpus, to encourage employees to improve their skills and to challenge new employees to consider a career in geriatric nursing. An important step was taken to establish an employee pension plan. Money was pledged to help initiate and underwrite this plan. A Group Retirement Annuity Plan, (401-B), at a cost of \$33,000 to the corporation, was put in place in February 1988.

A consultant was engaged to help identify areas needing attention so that UCRH could continue to strengthen its ministry among employees.

As a result of the consultant's research, the following proposals were made:

- 1.Strengthen the supervisory staff.
- 2.Improve communications among employees.
- 3.Constantly improve salaries.
- 4.Improve the benefit package.

In the fall of 1988 a corporate newsletter was initiated out of the development office known as *Kaleidoscope*, and each cost center was urged to design and distribute an internal newsletter for residents and employees, all in an effort to improve communications. There had been previous attempts to publish a newsletter, but never on a systematic basis. The name *Kaleidoscope* was chosen because it seemed to characterize the ministry of UCRH. The definition of kaleidoscope is "a series of changing phases or events." It also is an "instrument that is rotated to produce a succession of symmetrical designs, reflecting constantly changing patterns." Indeed the newsletter of UCRH was designed to share with residents, employees, donors and the wider community the events and happenings of this ministry. It was to serve as an instrument to enable persons to view the wonderful opportunities and outreach of this ministry and thus to encourage supporting contributions.

An endowment fund known as the Benevolent Trust Fund was established in 1988 and was designed to take the place of the Sustaining Fund Endowment, with a goal of two million to be raised for this fund by the year 2000. The income from this fund was to be used for charitable purposes. A Corporate Trust Fund was also established in this same year to help underwrite the cost of daily operation of the Corporate Office without having to depend so heavily on income from the cost centers. The income from this fund, besides helping to support corporate operations, was to "provide seed money for expansion and the development of creative new programs." Guidelines were approved for the investments of the corporation, which were distributed to three investment groups to be monitored by a Finance Committee of the board. In order to formalize various financial concerns and to record for future generations the plans and desires of donors and benefactors, a Handbook on Financial Concerns was compiled and approved by the Board of Directors on Feb. 23, 1988 as the official policies of UCRH regarding financial matters.

Another significant financial matter that transpired early in 1988 was in relationship to the FMHA loan of UCRH. The federal government, seeking to raise some needed capital, offered to settle its Farmers Home Administration loan at a substantially reduced rate. The principle of the loan to UCRH on the J.W. Abernethy Center had been reduced to \$643,000, and the federal government offered to settle for a cash payment of \$453,000. Being in a favorable financial position, UCRH was able to pay the loan off at a savings of nearly \$200,000.

UCRH continued to seek new programs that could be offered to help meet the needs of the public and make better use of its facilities. A convalescent and respite care program was first introduced at Piedmont Center early in 1988 and then at Abernethy Center shortly after the Residential Mall was opened in 1989. This program helped utilize the infirmary beds available at each center, while at the same time providing a much needed community service. Persons who needed convalescent care after a hospital stay were offered this care at a much lower rate than was charged in a rehab center of the hospital. Respite care offered families who were caretakers up to thirty days of respite by placing a loved one in this program. These were not money-making endeavors, but services provided for the community. They became a significant ministry much appreciated by those who found the need to use them.

A new aspect of ministry which had to be dealt with as the result of this industry's "coming of age" was marketing. Until the planning for Piedmont Center took on a serious dimension, the term "marketing" received little formal consideration. Persons came to Abernethy Center for nursing care or independent living opportunities mainly because they had a need for which UCRH offered a service. The demand was there and people came, and in many cases independent living units were designed to suit the residents and constructed with resident financing. Bond financing, however, as undertaken for the construction of Piedmont Center, required "pre-marketing" of units. It quickly became necessary that vacant independent living units be filled in order to meet the bottom line of the budget. Marketing became the term for reaching out to older adults and convincing them that they could live fuller, more purposeful lives in a retirement setting than in their own homes where the demands were greater than they were capable of meeting. During this transition time, staff often discussed the question of "marketing" versus "ministry," or "How do you incorporate the concept of marketing into ministry?" "How do you justify spending large sums of money to market services when that money could be used to respond to the needs of the elderly?"

Marketing offices were soon established at both centers, however, but with the understanding that their thrust was to remain chiefly ministry, and units were to be marketed to individuals as a way of improving their quality of life.

During 1988 effort was made to project in writing the thinking of UCRH regarding how marketing was to be incorporated as part of this ongoing ministry, and by 1991 it was described in a formal statement adopted and supported by the Board of Directors. This statement was to serve as a guide to all persons responsible for making the facilities of UCRH available to a wide range of older adults. (See Appendix.)

This statement on marketing was important because there seemed to be no stopping the growth of United Church Retirement Homes, and the demand for its services had so drastically increased. The executive director, however, pointed out that as we face the challenges of growth, "a requirement of this ministry is that we must have dreamers who can give us hope and point out new directions for what lies ahead in difficult and mounting uncertainties. Part of our ministry, as staff and members of the board, is dreaming about the future and planning for a better tomorrow in the area of working among the elderly."

The growth of the ministry of UCRH was characterized in 1988 by these statistics:

1980 — there were 93 residents at Abernethy Center, with 94 employees and a budget of \$1,122,000. The assets were listed at \$2,393,000.

1988 — there were 295 residents at two centers, with 203 employees and a budget of over \$4,000,000. The assets were listed at \$30,000,000.

The plans for an Eastern Virginia center intensified once the Piedmont Center was opened. It was certainly pushed by the Eastern Virginia Operational Advisory Committee, along with deep concern on the part of one of the members, Dr. Dardin Jones, who lived in Franklin, Va., and who worked extremely hard to acquire a Franklin site and have it properly rezoned for a retirement community. A master plan for the 89-acre Franklin site was prepared by Newman-Jones, architects from Winston-Salem.

The Franklin site was approved for a retirement center and rezoned in late 1984, but since then a number of circumstances and events raised questions concerning the wisdom of constructing a retirement center at that location. Business in the Franklin community was in a serious economic slump, and it was thought that it would be difficult to get prospective retirees to consider locating near the noxious odors from the local paper mill. These conditions needed to be considered, since before UCRH could issue tax-exempt bonds for the construction of the project, 60 to 70 percent of the units would need to be pre marketed. The other problem was that since the Franklin site was initially considered as a feasible location, another retirement community was being planned nearby. The UCRH Board made the decision that a study should be conducted by an outside independent firm to determine the present feasibility of a project in Franklin before additional staff time was invested in the project or additional money was spent on planning. J. O. Baker, Inc., a firm from Atlanta, Ga., was engaged to complete such a study. This study concluded that "a project such as the one being envisioned by UCRH could not be successful on the proposed site." After reviewing the process followed by this firm and the way they drew their conclusions, it was felt they did not deal with all the issues or consider all the positive aspects of the Franklin location. Even though the results of this study were not seen as conclusive and creditable by several members of the Virginia Operational Advisory Committee, they did agree to appoint an alternative site committee to begin work immediately. An all-day planning session was held with the Eastern Virginia Operational Advisory Committee, board members and staff at First Christian Church in Suffolk, Va., early in 1988. Out of this session came the decision to complete a second, more in-depth study and to then make a decision concerning future action. The firm of Howell and Associates of Washington, D.C., was engaged through the recommendation of the American Association of Homes for the Aging, and their report was presented to the UCRH Board on Aug. 23, 1988. The report read in part "Our study indicates that in the face of what Southhampton Memorial Hospital is doing, the population numbers in the Franklin area would not be able to adequately support another facility in the immediate area." The report further indicated that "a facility located in the Suffolk area has a very good chance for success."

Shortly after this report was received and carefully analyzed, the alternative site committee presented its findings along with a recommendation that an option be taken on a 172 acre piece of property in Suffolk and that staff work with the Eastern Virginia Association and Southern Conference to possibly locate an intergenerational program, as well as the association office, and that procedures necessary for getting the property properly zoned be entered into.

Action was taken by the board in February 1989 that "if proper zoning is obtained on the recommended Suffolk site, the 89 acre site in Franklin is to be put on the market for \$10,000 to \$15,000 per acre since it has water and sewer to the site." This was a joyous occasion, with the board taking action to proceed with making application to the Virginia Department of Health for approval to proceed with a Continuing Care Retirement Community in Suffolk, Virginia, if all requirements could be properly put into place.

By early 1989 Piedmont Center had been dedicated, financing was well in place, and the center showed signs of meeting all of the expectations of those who had worked so hard to bring it into being. The \$2 million of corporate funds that had been used to provide seed money and asset security for the bond issue to finance the project was now set free by NCNB and the Medical Care Commission. The 172 acre property in Suffolk, with a master plan drawn by Freeman White Architects of Charlotte, N.C., received favorable zoning approval from the city, giving rise to an enthusiastic approval by the UCRH Board of Directors for purchase of the entire 172 acre site. The \$2 million seed money for the purchase of the site was made available from corporate funds with the understanding that when the Franklin site was sold and other income was available, it would be paid back to the corporation so it could be used in meeting challenges in other areas. The decision to purchase the Suffolk site set off a series of events which tested the dedication and commitment of the board to this venture.

Several congregations and a number of individuals were very disappointed with the decision and felt they had been misled by those seeking funds for the Virginia project. They felt they had contributed to a project that was certain to be located in Franklin, so they requested that their contributions be returned. Some monies were returned with the emphasis that "this is being done for the well being of the whole church, and that the decision not to use the Franklin site was based on qualified research and in the interest of bringing into being a successful project."

Bringing the Virginia project into being proved to be no easy task, in fact one of the most daunting yet undertaken by UCRH. Efforts had to be juggled between negotiating with the city of Suffolk for the construction of utilities and raising enough money to support the upfront costs. The churches of the area seemed to want the project, but appeared to be struggling to support it financially. Those closely involved with the project were convinced that it was needed, that they had a beautiful and well-located site, and that if all the problems could ever be worked out it would be successful.

At one point in the process, on Feb. 27, 1990, the Board of Directors was encouraged by the executive director/CEO to keep the vision and continue to move forward. Here are his words: "You could look at many of the things that are happening and get a negative attitude about the ministry we are about. Virginia is a good example of that ... looking at all the barriers as we try to begin a new project makes one wonder if it can be done. But when we look at the good things that have already happened through UCRH, we become enthusiastic and have a positive attitude, knowing that greater things are still possible. Do not quench the Spirit! (1 Thessalonians 5:18) We must give the Spirit of God a chance to lead us into new avenues of service, we must be open to the Spirit so that creative opportunities can be found for responding to human need, we must allow the Spirit to enable persons to dream new dreams and catch new visions, we should look to the Spirit to empower risk taking and community building, and as we do so let us remember that greater works than have yet been possible will be the result of a Spirit-filled journey!"

Stumbling blocks continued to thwart the project. The city of Suffolk began the negotiations for utilities to the Virginia site with the requirement that UCRH build an eight-inch water line a distance of about a mile and two tenths. As negotiations continued the requirement moved from an eight-inch line to a 24-inch line by the time it was constructed in 1997, with an initial cost of \$923,513. Some of this expenditure is to be shared by the City of Suffolk as additional hookups are made to the line. Indian Point Associates, the company planning to develop the land on the east side of Kings Fork Road, where the site is located, has agreed to share in the cost of the water and sewer lines at such time as their site is properly zoned and developed. UCRH hopes at some time in the future to recoup at least half of the original cost of the water main.

The city of Windsor, Va., contracted with the city of Suffolk for a forced-fed sewer line to be built that would traverse down Kings Fork Road directly in front of the UCRH site. The construction of this line was completed in 1998 and helped reduce the cost of what originally was asked of UCRH by the city of Suffolk for a sewer line. As these lines were constructed and the required costs were paid by UCRH, an implementing resolution was passed so that when bonds were issued to cover the cost of what was to be

known as the Lake Prince Center, any loans from the corporation could be included in the bond issue and be paid back to the corporation.

The twentieth anniversary of UCRH was to be celebrated in August 1991, and it seemed an appropriate time to launch the capital campaign as well as an educational campaign geared especially at helping to move the Lake Prince Center forward. The campaign was approved by the Southern Conference of the UCC and by the denominational Council for Health and Human Service Ministries. Institutional Development Associates of Salisbury, N.C. was chosen to help conduct the campaign, with Mr. Henry Bernhardt designated as the staff person to work with the UCRH director of research and development, C. Shuford Abernethy. The campaign was known as SHARE: Support Health and Retirement Experiences. A presentation for the campaign was made at the annual Southern Conference meeting by way of a skit highlighted by the song "Virginia Should Have One Too!" written by Jo Anne Flick.

The challenge was issued to "catch the vision of what your sharing can produce, and reach out to help others be responsive to the vision." Well-designed promotional materials were produced with churches and individuals systematically challenged to respond in order to make this dream a reality. The goal of \$35 per member was set for those churches that would step forward as "Pace Setter Churches." While the campaign did not raise the \$1.5 million that was its goal, it did raise nearly \$700,000, and it did raise the consciousness of a lot of people regarding the ministry of UCRH, and more specifically the plans for a Virginia center.

There was a lingering feeling among many that the Virginia project would never become a reality. Others felt the Spirit was moving and felt that when the time was right it would happen. One of the most encouraging meetings held with regard to this dream was at Bethlehem Christian Church on Aug. 27, 1993. In attendance at this meeting were board members, Virginia Operational Advisory Committee members, Suffolk City Council members, and key persons such as the former governor of Virginia, Mr. Mills Godwin, who served as honorary chair of the SHARE campaign. This was an open meeting where community and church persons could ask questions and dialogue regarding the proposal. There was a cohesiveness of commitment among the responsible group, who gave assurance that every effort would be made to fulfill the dream of a full-service retirement community sponsored by the UCRH in the Suffolk area.

The next few years were filled with one frustration after another, including the long hours of travel from Newton to Suffolk, and while it was often discouraging, the UCRH staff and the members of the Virginia Operational Advisory Committee kept the faith. There was one point late in 1993 when things looked really optimistic, when it looked as if nursing beds could be provided on the site through a joint project with Obici Hospital in Suffolk. A Real Estate Option Purchase Agreement was entered into with the hospital, and a Certificate of Need was submitted to the state of Va. under the name Hampton Roads Nursing Center, Inc. The Certificate of Need was for sixty nursing beds which had been approved for the hospital to construct in Smithfield, Virginia. The request was made for the beds to be relocated to the site to be developed by UCRH on Kings Fork Road. All the papers were prepared and the state was petitioned for the change, with the feeling that this would be the key component that would help market the independent living units of the proposed CCRC. The proposal provided for an alliance to be formed between UCRH and Obici Hospital that would be beneficial to the whole community by making many new services available. The hospital was to own the nursing facility, which was to be managed and operated by UCRH. The key players made a trip to Richmond, Va. to walk the project through the various approval agencies, only to find that the whole idea was opposed by a number of already existing nursing facilities to the extent that the state agency refused to give its approval.

One stumbling block after another seemed to curtail progress on the proposed center, but while progress was slow, every opportunity was grasped to move one step closer to the dream. By the end of 1993 a rather comprehensive booklet was prepared and printed to interpret the plans for developing the 172-acre site, along with concerns yet to be clarified with the city. This booklet was shared at a meeting with the various city department heads, outlining the responsibilities of UCRH with regard to the project and presenting the benefits of the project to the city. Attorney Sam Glascock of Suffolk was retained to help negotiate an acceptable, workable agreement with the city and put in place all the legal documents necessary to getting the project underway. Sylvia Old Associates of Virginia Beach was employed to help work out all the necessary arrangements with the State Department of Health. These steps were taken because there were a number of other important corporate issues other than the Virginia project requiring the attention of the UCRH staff.

As UCRH entered its twenty-first year of operation some organizational changes needed to be made to enable it to meet the new challenges facing this maturing and expanding ministry. United Church Retirement Home now became legally United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. Consideration was given to the name United Church Retirement Centers, but the word homes seemed more expressive of the kind of living opportunities that those responsible for this ministry were trying to provide. The name of the Operational Committees was changed to Operation Councils in order to give those persons who were asked to serve a better feeling about the importance of their involvement. Each center was asked to form three resident committees in order to open lines of communication with residents and to feed ideas and concerns into the council and to the administrators of the various centers: property, marketing and development, and planning. The executive director was designated as president and CEO of the corporation. This was done in order that papers needing to be negotiated and signed could be expedited in the corporate office without calling the officers together. With this change the officers of the board would now be chairperson, vice chairperson, treasurer and secretary. These changes were made in the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws early in October 1991 in a move to better facilitate the future plans and actions of this growing ministry.

Early in 1992 the question was raised concerning why UCRH was not able to attract more residents of color as retirees, although both the resident and staff communities had been inclusive since UCRH opened in 1971. In order to understand this better and to do some intentional planning, a Committee on Inclusive Ministry was formed and met with leaders from the Southern Conference on Aug. 5, 1992. Out of this effort came recommendations adopted by the board to facilitate "a more visible inclusive ministry:"

Here are three of the recommendations which were to be implemented by staff:

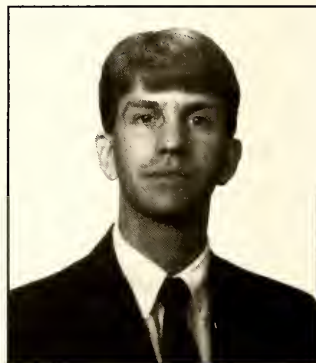
1. that consideration be given to hiring, at some point, a black corporate staff person,
2. that an intentional effort be made to reach out to potential black residents,
3. that marketing persons and any other consultants hired by United Church Retirement Homes, Inc., be informed regarding the intentions of those responsible for this ministry that we work to make it visibly inclusive.

Another step in getting ready to meet the challenge of the 90s was to employ, in August 1992, the first corporate-level Director of Human Resources in the person of Ms. Susan Dunlap. Her responsibility was to oversee employee relations and training, employee health benefits, volunteer programs, and reaching out into the churches and community to recruit support for this ministry. One of the first orders of business was to initiate a "cafeteria plan" for employee benefits and help put in place a partially self-funded workers' compensation program, with \$7,500 set aside to pay small workers compensation claims rather than having these paid by an insurance carrier.

There were some other significant staff changes taking place about this time in the life of UCRH. Rev. D. Russell Myers, who had served quite ably as Administrator of Piedmont Center since it opened, resigned to accept a challenge with a Baptist retirement community.

Mr. C. Shuford Abernethy, III, Director of Research and Development of UCRH since 1986, had completed his administrator-in-training program and received his nursing home administrator's license and was challenged to accept this position and lead Piedmont Center in some exciting new directions.

After careful consideration, he responded positively and moved his family to Lexington to assume the duties of this important position. This left the position of Director of Research and Development open, a position that he had helped mold into a very significant role as the ministry of UCRH continued to expand. Marketing and fundraising were key areas of concern for which the person in this role was responsible. The Director of Research and Development was also at this point, by virtue of this position, the Secretary of the corporation and the main backup person for the Executive Director. Prayerful consideration was given to finding the right person for this position. The Executive Director considered it almost providential when Rev. Dr. D. Lee Jessup accepted the invitation to join the corporate staff of UCRH. Dr. Jessup was at the time pastor of First Reformed United Church of Christ in Lexington, N.C., and had kept up with the work of UCRH through the dedicated involvement of one of his members, Mr. C. Boyce Sink.



C. Shuford Abernethy, III, Director of Research and Development and newly appointed Administrator of Piedmont Center, UCRH.



Dr. Lee Jessup, Director of Public Relations and Development, UCRH.

Dr. Jessup was a dedicated church leader and pastor with exceptional writing, speaking and administrative skills. He was well equipped for the position of Director of Public Relations and Development, and was greeted with enthusiasm when he joined the staff on Jan. 1, 1993.

One of the new challenges of the 90s that caught the attention and the imagination of UCRH was that of providing affordable housing for older adults in the wider community, although at least two former attempts had been made to provide such housing in the Davidson County area of North Carolina through Piedmont Housing, Inc., and had failed. Now through a cooperative effort with First Reformed UCC in Burlington, N.C., new priority was given to this area of ministry. First Reformed UCC provided the land near their church building, and UCRH provided its expertise in providing housing for older adults, along with some seed money to submit a Housing and Urban Development application to construct a forty-unit apartment building. This project was approved and funded. Although it took more than five years before the project was to be completed, it was dedicated in April 1999 and provides affordable housing for more than forty persons. The facility is known as The Willows, and is located on Tarpley Street in Burlington.

A second challenge in this area of service came when New Covenant UCC, a new church in Chapel Hill, N.C., made the decision that it could no longer make payments on a 9.7-acre site which was being held by the Board for Homeland Ministries for a new building. Remembering its former commitment to engage in a visible project in eastern North Carolina, UCRH worked with the board to make the site available for a project that would give a meaningful identity to the UCC in the Chapel Hill area. A project co-sponsored by United Church of Chapel Hill, New Covenant Church, UCC and UCRH was planned. As the plan developed for this project it included a HUD 202, Section 8 housing unit consisting of forty-two apartments and a HUD-financed seventy-two bed assisted living facility with space designed for an Adult Day Care program. There was approximately two acres of the site left for the future development of a third unit of some type. UCRH provided the funds to give the group control of the site, and after two attempts, with HUD applications filed through Perry Craven and Associates of Winston-Salem, N.C., the project received HUD approval for the funding of both buildings. The apartment complex with a subsidy component provided through HUD Section 8 and the assisted-living facility were constructed over the next couple of years. They became known as Covenant Place, dedicated May 7, 1998, and Shepherd House, dedicated Oct. 25, 1998.

In the fall of 1994 UCRH was approached by representatives of the city of Newton, N.C. and the Newton School Board concerning the possibility of renovating the unused Newton Elementary School into a center for older adults, perhaps to include some apartments. The UCRH Board voted to "look with favor on being involved in the renovation of the Newton Elementary School into a center for older adults, with primary emphasis on housing." Staff members worked with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments to attempt to bring this project into being. While this project failed to become a reality due to the lack of community support, it did provide the incentive for UCRH to keep seeking ways to better respond to the needs of older adults in the wider community and to take steps to become formally recognized as a certified HUD manager. Other churches that UCRH worked with during this period to possibly joint sponsor community housing were Holy Covenant, Charlotte and St. John's, Kannapolis. In the fall of 1995 Rev. Wilmer Brown was employed at the corporate level as Director of Operations and Outreach Ministries.

Rev. Brown fulfilled the desires of the board to be intentional about hiring an African American on the corporate staff and to provide additional staff time to strengthen the area of ministry defined in the mission statement as helping to enhance the quality of life of older adults by "outreach into the wider community." Rev. Brown was a welcome addition to the staff and the work of UCRH. He was at home in almost every setting, and did much to strengthen the ties of UCRH with church and community. He became one of only twenty-eight persons throughout the United States to be certified as a National Housing Manager. In the years that followed his employment on staff, successful HUD applications were submitted



Wilmer Brown, Director of Housing and Outreach Ministries, UCRH.

and funded for New Bern and Statesville, N.C. The NOAH project in New Bern is a thirty-seven unit HUD 202 apartment complex which was dedicated for service in June 2001. Emmanuel's Place in Statesville is a thirty-nine unit HUD 202 facility that was completed in 2001.

In 1994 a longtime dream of many persons interested in providing an outlet for items no longer needed by residents of the cost centers and at the same time helping to increase the corpus of the Benevolent Trust Fund, was realized. Jo Anne Flick, who had served as Village Coordinator and later as Administrative Assistant for Independent Living at Abernethy Center, accepted the challenge of planning and organizing a resale shop in downtown Newton. Jo Anne had retired from her position at Abernethy Center a few months before accepting this challenge and knew quite well the need for such a project. She was assisted in this effort by Agnes McDaniels, former Director of Volunteers at Abernethy Center, and by Betty Bicknell, former long-term volunteer at Abernethy who had decided to become a resident at Abernethy Center. The staff of Abernethy Center had conducted yard sales to dispose of items no longer needed or left behind by residents and their families. As this center grew, the task of conducting yard sales and storing goods from one year to the next became a major undertaking. With Piedmont Center and other cost centers carrying on ministry, there were more and more items that needed an outlet for disposal. The Gift and Thrift Shop became the answer. It was to be operated by volunteers, and all profits were to go to the Benevolent Trust Fund. Items for sale would be received not only from the various cost centers, but also from the wider community. An added dimension of the shop was to market SERRV, an agency through which Christian mission stations around the world are able to market their wares, or from local artists or craftspeople. These items were to benefit the worldwide mission of the church. Gift and Thrift became a corporate project under the direction of Operations and Outreach Ministries and soon began to add thousands of dollars annually to the Benevolent Trust Fund. Jo Anne served as volunteer manager of the store for the first several years, but before long it became necessary to employ a part-time manager, and Mrs. Agnes McDaniels assumed the position. She managed the shop, as well as recruiting and training the volunteers. An advisory committee helps make decisions, supports the manager and keeps the program a positive, creative part of UCRH's ministry. The shop provides a ministry to the community as well by offering a variety of useful household items at affordable prices.



Rev. Richard Rinker, Minister of Christian Education of the Southern Conference, Ms. Bessie Allen, Mr. Hilland Henderson, Dr. Donald Flick - Southern Conference Committee on Aging.

Since UCRH was established by UCC churches of the Southern Conference, it has always felt a responsibility to maintain strong ties with the churches and sister UCC institutions. In the late 1980s a cooperative effort was launched with a special committee of the Southern Conference of the UCC "to help raise the consciousness of people in our churches concerning the challenge of ministry among the elderly." A guidebook was published by UCRH entitled "Local Church Guide for Ministry Among Older Adults," and training sessions were held across the Conference with the help of UCRH staff to help "educate and stimulate persons to respond in creative ways to the concerns of the elderly." This was an attempt to motivate local congregations to give priority to improving their ministry among older adults within the local churches. With the expansion of the ministry of UCRH and the growing population of aging persons, it was emphasized again early in 1994 that UCRH should take the

initiative to strengthen its ties with the church. An ad hoc UCC Relations Committee was formed to help promote closer working ties with United Church judicatories. One of the recommendations of this committee was the formation of a commission or committee within the structure of the Southern Conference through which representatives of the Conference and from the various church-related institutions in the conference would "help continue and support the work of our fine institutions and be alert to develop new ministries and take new initiatives" in response to the needs of our time. Such a committee was formed and did open some new avenues of conversation and service among the institutions.

The 25th anniversary year of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. was a banner year, with the dedication of the second phase of Piedmont Center. Part of the 25th Anniversary Celebration was not only the dedication of the second phase of Piedmont Center on April 28, 1996, but also the official filing of the Certificate of Public Need application for Lake Prince Center with the Virginia Department of Health for forty nursing beds and two hundred independent living units. With the sewer and water lines completed and with approval of the Certificate of Public Need by the state, Lake Prince Center was sure to become a reality and many older adults will be blessed by its ministry. UCRH is confident that the city of Suffolk will benefit from this venture beyond its expectations. Undoubtedly people will look back and wish there had been greater effort for favorable negotiations so that this Virginia project could have become a reality much sooner, but perhaps the situation has progressed as favorably as it could.

Having seen the Lake Prince Center to the brink of reality, Dr. Donald P. Flick felt it was time for him to retire, and he announced his intention to the Board of Directors at its meeting on Feb. 24, 1996. Immediate steps were taken to organize a search committee, with Dr. Thomas Tiemann of Hillsborough, N.C., serving as chairperson. It was the plan of the committee to secure a creative and experienced person to fill this position within a reasonable length of time, so that hopefully the individual would be available to assume their duties before Dr. Flick found it necessary to vacate the position. A nationwide search was undertaken, and it was with a great deal of joy and confidence that on Aug. 26, 1997, Dr. Flick transferred the office of CEO/president to Rev. C. Philip Laucks.

Since Rev. Laucks had been the first full-time staff person of UCRH in the early 1970s it was, in many ways, like coming home for him but coming with a great deal of experience and maturity to a ministry that had also matured and expanded. Those who were involved in this transfer of office joined in with a great deal of enthusiasm because they saw it as a good circle, where a person who helped bring a ministry into being returned to help that same institution dream new dreams and pursue in new ways the vision of "providing quality services at affordable prices to older adults." Rev. Laucks received the endorsement and support of Dr. Flick and accepted his new challenge with enthusiasm and commitment. He was pleased to assume his duties with a strong financial position being reported by the auditors, and an expanding vision supported by a capable staff and a dedicated Board of Directors. He helped show his appreciation, along with the Board of Directors, for the nearly twenty-year ministry of Dr. Flick with UCRH by presenting him with a plaque at the Aug. 25, 1998, meeting of the board naming him as Executive Director Emeritus.

The plaque read:

"In Recognition of his seventeen years
of devoted service and dedication
to Christian ministry with and among older adults
at United Church Retirement Homes Inc.,
the Board of Directors
hereby confers the title Executive Director Emeritus
upon Dr. Donald P. Flick
on this, the 25th day of August, 1998."



*Donald Flick, Executive Director Emeritus with
Jack Frank, Board Chairperson.*

Rev. Laucks quickly became immersed in the many challenges of this creative and demanding ministry. Having been involved in the early history, and having followed the progress with much interest through the years, it was not necessary for him to spend much time in the "learning curve." Because of his own effective style of management and the need to move certain aspects of this ministry ahead as quickly as possible, particularly the Lake Prince Center, he made some appropriate changes in the structure of operations. The administrators of the major cost centers became vice presidents of the corporation, as did the corporate staff who were formerly known as directors. New challenges for some staff persons and the need for additional staff positions to help meet the fast developing Lake Prince Center and expanding outreach programs brought about the following staff changes.

1. Mr. Douglas J. Fleegle was employed as Vice President of Operations on Aug. 31, 1998, with responsibilities for the day-to-day operations of the cost centers. This meant working closely with the various managers, administrators and vice presidents of administration.
2. Mr. Gary Hurd, who had served as Director of Finance and Planning for more than thirteen years, made the decision to seek employment in a new area of interest, and Mr. Robert L. McKemy was employed as Vice President of Finance on Jan. 1, 1999.
3. Mr. Larry Sink, who had served as Director of Nursing at Abernethy Center for twenty-three years, resigned to accept a challenge in another field. He returned to the staff of UCRH as administrator of Shepherd House, Chapel Hill, N.C., in May 2000.
4. Mr. C. Shuford Abernethy, III, terminated his employment as Administrator of Piedmont Center on June 19, 2000, after being with UCRH for nearly fourteen years, to work with his father to establish a project for older adults in Hickory, a housing facility to be known as Abingdon Glen. He was replaced by Mr. Richard E. Faught as Vice President of Administration at Piedmont Center. Mr. Faught stayed for only a few months, and was replaced on May 2, 2001 by Mr. Dale Lyles, who was previously the senior Vice President at Community General Hospital in Thomasville.
5. Dr. D. Lee Jessup resigned on Jan. 12, 2001, after nearly nine years as Director of Development of UCRH, to become CEO of the United Way of Davidson County. Mrs. Mary Wesley, who formerly was Assistant Administrator of Abernethy Center, became the new Vice President of Development on May 14, 2001.
6. Rev. Wilmer Brown, after more than five years as Director of Operations and outreach ministries, resigned on April 20, 2001 to accept a position on the staff of the South Central Conference of the UCC. Ms. Renee Powell, who was formerly the manager of Covenant Place in Chapel Hill, became Vice President of Outreach Ministries on May 1, 2001.

As these significant staff changes were taking place the good work of UCRH continued to expand. New management services were established to give oversight to the growing number of HUD and other special projects. With the decrease in interest rates, it was advantageous to refinance the bond issue for Piedmont Center with a savings over the long term of over \$1 million. This was one of the first steps taken by Rev. Laucks and the board to help improve the financial position of Piedmont Center, which, over the last five years of operation, 1993-1998, had experienced a significant deficit. The ad valorem tax issue had raised its head again, with the state Supreme Court ruling that legislation granting tax-exempt status to church related 501-C-3 institutions was unconstitutional. New effort on the part of individual centers and the state association of nonprofit homes enabled corporations such as UCRH to be granted tax-exempt status for a two-year period, as plans are made for new legislation. It seems to be made clearer than ever that UCRH and all other church-related, nonprofit retirement communities must continually prepare to defend their position as nonprofit institutions and show social accountability if their tax-exempt status is to remain secure.

There seems to be no end to new opportunities to occupy the interest and time of staff. In 1999 a joint proposal was entered into by Catawba Memorial Hospital, Lutheran Services for the Aging, and United Church Retirement Homes. Under a corporation known as Catawba Valley Long-Term Care, Inc. a Certificate of Need application was made for ninety nursing home beds in Catawba County. While this was an unsuccessful venture, it demonstrated how alliances such as this can be formed to bring into being some important new models.

A more successful venture was the effort of UCRH to purchase Centerclair Nursing Center in Davidson County. According to Rev. Laucks, "Mr. Dwight Hedrick, chairperson of the Board of Directors, recommended to the Board that they purchase Centerclair in order to secure sixty additional Medicare/Medicaid certified beds for the expansion of the work and ministry of Piedmont Center. It was Mr. Hedrick's foresight, commitment to mission and negotiating skills, along with our board's endorsement that brought his recommendation for action to a reality." The sixty-six bed facility, with a licensed child day care center, was purchased and transferred to UCRH on Oct. 1, 2000. Mr. Richard Cranford, who received his administrator-in-training instruction at Piedmont Center in the 1980s, became Administrator of Centerclair. It was good to welcome Rick to a staff position with UCRH.

Early in 2000 a long planned step was taken concerning the benevolent work of the corporation, with the official establishment of a UCRH Foundation. The interest from the investments of this foundation will be used to carry on benevolent work among residents and staff. It was established, as other endowment funds

had been, with some of the interest income always being returned to the corpus in order to keep the value of the foundation current.

The outreach ministry related to HUD continues to grow, with applications submitted for Suffolk, Va., and for Durham, N.C., in 2000 and for areas such as Albemarle, N.C., Hickory, N.C. and Franklin, Va., in future years. The plan is to submit at least two applications each year if HUD funding for affordable housing continues to be available to nonprofit sponsors.

Construction of the Lake Prince Center began on July 22, 2000, with Neilson Corp. of Harrisonburg, Va., as the contractor. Major effort has been placed on the pre-marketing of this center with positive results. As of the writing of this history in September 2001, deposits have been received from more than one hundred prospective residents to reserve a unit at the center. In the first phase of construction there are only 130 units which would indicate that by the time they are ready for occupancy early in the summer of 2002 all units will have been reserved. It has been reported that construction is proceeding within the projected budget and ahead of schedule.

With continued growth of the corporation, the Morrison Building is increasingly becoming too crowded to house all planning and management activity. The Board of Directors knew that as the vision of UCRH was pursued, that would eventually be the case, and acknowledged that fact early in the 1990s, proposing that "at such time as a creative and financially feasible use could be found for the present corporate office building," consideration would be given to moving it off the Abernethy Center campus. On Aug. 24, 2000, plans were put in place to give serious consideration to moving the corporate office "into new enlarged space in the Hickory-Conover-Newton area, and to move in this direction by January 2002." This would be an appropriate time to make a move, as UCRH begins its 31st year of ministry and as there are numerous new dreams, new ideas and new challenges related to pursuing the vision set forth when this ministry was only a dream in the minds and hearts of a few dedicated individuals determined to initiate a visible ministry among older adults in the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ.



Donald Flick (left) and Philip Laucks (right), the outgoing and incoming Executive Director of UCRH, 1997, both committed to carrying on the dream and vision of UCRH.

Section III

Corporate Leadership At A Glance

United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. has had many capable leaders throughout its thirty years of ministry. The first full-time staff person was hired in the fall of 1970 in the position of administrator. This position changed over the years as the work of the corporation expanded. As it became a multifacility corporation, the chief executive officer took on the title of executive director/president, and in an effort to keep the terminology current with the times, in 2001 this staff person is referred to as president/chief executive officer.

Volunteer leadership has always been important in the life and ministry of this nonprofit, church-related corporation. The idea and dream of a visible ministry among the older adults of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ was first introduced in the early 1950s, and from then until 1970 all of the organizational structure, fundraising, planning and construction of the first building was carried out by volunteers. The corporation still has a volunteer Board of Directors, elected by the Southern Conference, and volunteer Operations Council members at each of the cost centers. These individuals give unselfishly of their time and skills to provide counsel and guidance as well as oversight and support to the paid staff. They approve the policies and procedures which enable the paid staff to carry out their responsibilities.



Rev. C. Philip Laucks, 1970 – 1976

Rev. C. Philip Laucks came to United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. as a young man who had a passion for carrying on ministry among older adults. He was a graduate of Catawba College and Princeton Theological Seminary. He served as pastor of Good Shepherd United Church of Christ near Reading, Penn., along with his wife, Barbara. While serving as Administrator/Executive Director of UCRH, he used every opportunity to grow and learn about this expanding new field of ministry. He became recognized as a leader in the field and was called in 1976 to become Executive Director of United Church Retirement Homes of Ohio, a corporation that at that time operated five facilities in Ohio and Indiana. Three daughters were born to Phil and Barbara while they were at United Church Retirement Homes: Lindsay Beth, Laurie Ann and Patricia Ann.

Rev. Lawrence N. Strunk, 1976 – 1984

Rev. Lawrence N. Strunk came to UCRH from Pleasant Hill, Tenn., where he was Executive Director of Uplands Retirement Center, a sister facility. Prior to that time he had served local congregations in Knapolis, N.C., Harrisonburg, Va., and Hagerstown, Md. He had also served as administrator of a hospital in Minnesota. Lawrence helped broaden the vision of UCRH and moved it more visibly into the area of retirement living. His wife, Edith, who was a registered nurse, also contributed much in helping the nursing facility maintain a high level of quality care. Edith was diagnosed with a brain tumor and died in 1983 at the Health Care Unit of J. W. Abernethy Center, which had been so important to her. Soon after her death, Lawrence announced his retirement. He became a resident of Homewood Retirement Center in Hagerstown, Md., another sister facility of the United Church. One of his major contributions to UCRH was to help generate benevolent giving that enabled this ministry to grow and expand. Rev. Strunk died on Feb. 12, 1996.



Rev. Dr. Donald P. Flick, 1984 – 1997



Rev. Dr. Donald P. Flick came to UCRH in 1980 as Administrative Assistant and Director of Development. His first assignment was to raise seed money to enable Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C., to be constructed. He had experience in the field of older adults, having worked as part-time Director of Development at Uplands Retirement Center and as Associate Executive Director at Homewood Retirement Center. He received his doctorate in 1980 from Lancaster Theological Seminary with his dissertation around the theme: "Ministry of the Elderly." Dr. Flick served as administrator of J. W. Abernethy Center before becoming Executive Director of the corporation. With his engineering and theological background he was able to help build both the structures to house and care for residents and the organization to enable residents to live to their fullest potential. Under his leadership as Executive Director/President, UCRH grew into a multifaceted ministry. He became a leader in the field of aging and retirement living and served on the House of Delegates of the American Association of Homes for the Aging, as President of the North Carolina Non Profit Homes Association, and on the Board of Directors of the United Church Council for Health and Human Services. He received the Executive of the Year award from the United Church Council in 1995.

Rev. C. Philip Laucks, 1997 –



Rev. C. Philip Laucks returned as Executive Director of UCRH after being away for more than twenty years. He returned as a seasoned leader dedicated to the expanded and expanding ministry of UCRH. His enthusiasm, coupled with his skills and love for this ministry which he had helped to bring into being, made him the ideal individual to enable UCRH to successfully meet the challenges before it at this particular time in history. He quickly saw what needed to be done if the corporation was to continue to pursue the vision of excellence in older adult services, and gave himself wholeheartedly to the task. He has dealt skillfully with the day-to-day tasks of administration and has shaped the organization to plan creatively to meet the challenges of the future.

Other Corporate Staff

Director of Finance and Planning

1984 — 1985 *Mr Benjamin Hosaflook*
1995 — 1998 *Mr Gary R Hurd*

Director of Research and Development

1986 — 1992 *Mr C. Shuford Abernethy, III*
1993 — 2001 *Dr D. Lee Jessup*

Director of Human Resources

1994 — 1995 *Ms. Susan C. Dunlap*

Director of Operations and Outreach Ministries

1996 — 2001 *Rev. Wilmer Brown*

Executive Secretary

1979 — 1995 *Mrs. Joyce A. Reidenbach*

Corporate Staff, 2001

President/CEO

Rev. C. Philip Laucks — 1997

Vice President of Development

Mrs. Mary M. Wesley — 2001

Vice President of Operations

Mr. Douglas J. Fleege — 1998

Vice President of Finance

Mr. Robert L. McKemy, Jr. — 1999

Vice President of Outreach

Ms. Renee O. Powell — 2001

Director of Human Resources

Ms. Lee Syria — 2000

Administrative Assistant

Ms. Mona P. Huffman — 1994



Board of Directors, 2001. Front Row (Left to Right): Dr Leroy Howell, Mr. J. Ray Deal, Rev. John Settlemyer, Dr. Thomas K. Tiemann, Mr. Gregory A. Hedrick, Mrs. Brenda Eckard, Rev. C. Philip Laucks, Mr. Douglas F. Brown. Second Row: Dr. Betty L. Bowman, Mr. Joe H. Hege, Barry Leonard, Joel Luper, Mr. Anthony Branch, Mrs. Patricia McNear, Dr. Herman Haller, Mr. Sidney Daughtrey, Mr. Albert L. Loflin, Mrs. Mary Wesley. Not Pictured: Rev. Mark L. Burns, Mr. Leon W. Desbields, Mr. Irvin Sink, Mrs. Susie Keele, Dr. William R. Crawford, and Mr. Charles R. Henderson, Jr.

Presidents or Chairpersons of the Board



Rev. Lawrence A. Leonard
1956 — 1974
Served churches in Landis,
Thomasville, Ashboro,
and Burlington, N.C.



Rev. John W. Settlemyre
1975 — 1976
Served churches in Whitsett,
High Point,
and Burlington, N.C.



Claude S. Abernethy, Jr.
1977 — 1980
Newton, N.C.



Rev. G. Melvin Palmer
1981 — 1982
Served churches in Lexington
and Greensboro, N.C.



Max D. Bumgarner
1983 — 1984
Maiden, N.C.



Rev., Dr. Charles L. Thompson, Jr.

1984 —

Burlington, N.C.

As vice president he completed the term of Max Bumgarner who resigned for personal reasons.



C. Boyce Sink

1985 — 1987, 1990

Welcome-Lexington, N.C.



Rev. Bobby R. Bonds

1988 — 1989

Served churches in Thomasville, Brookford, Kannapolis, and Lexington, N.C.



Rev. F. Michael Hooper

1991 — 1992

Served churches in Burlington and Lexington, N.C.



J.T. Baxter Morton

1993

Albemarle, N.C.



Rev. Jamie T. Fonville
1994 — 1995
Served churches in Winston-Salem,
Hickory, and Thomasville, N.C.



Jack H. Frank
1996 — 1997
Lexington, N.C.



Thomas K. Tiemann
1998 — 2001
Hillsborough-Elon College, N.C.



Dwight L. Hedrick
1999
Lexington, N.C.



J. Ray Deal
2000
Burlington, N.C.

Board of Directors Officers

The Board of Directors, sometimes referred to as the Board of Trustees, began as a group of twelve persons in 1958 and was increased to eighteen over the years. Originally there was a requirement that there would be a designated number of laymen, laywomen and clergy, but this was dropped in favor of choosing the most qualified persons for the positions. The board did adopt guidelines in the mid 1990s for the Nominating Committee, so that the various groups and areas of the Southern Conference would be given appropriate consideration and be represented on the Board.

The Board of Directors originally met at the time the Conference met, and then as they became more organized, the meetings were specified to occur in September and March. In 1987 there was some major reorganization, and for the sake of convenience the meetings were moved to August and February. It was at this time that the committees that had functioned as Operational Advisory Committees were more formally organized as Operations Councils. It was determined that all cost centers should have an Operations Council to help give guidance to staff and help cultivate grassroots support for each cost center's ministry.

Many persons have served on the board and on various committees over the years, and have given unselfishly of their time and talents to help carry on the work and ministry of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. Sincere appreciation is extended to all of them, and while not all are mentioned by name, their contributions to this important ministry are most appreciated. The officers of the board are here recognized as a representative group of all of the fine people who have volunteered to serve God through the mission and ministry of United Church Retirement Home.

Original Study Committee

*Lawrence A. Leonard, Chairman
Roy E. Leinbach, Sr.
Willie F. Everhart*

*John W. Settlemyre
John Robinson, Sr.*

1958 Board of Trustees Elected by Southern Conference

*Rev. Lawrence A. Leonard, Chairman
Mr. Willie F. Everhart, Vice Chairman
Mrs. Hiram (Margaret) Davis, Secretary
Mr. Verne Blackwelder, Treasurer
Rev. Edwin M. Alcorn
Rev. G. Melvin Palmer*

*Mrs. Henry (Ernestine) Kennedy, Jr.
Rev. J. Yorke Peeler
Mrs. W. C. (Helen) Lyerly
Rev. Joshua L. Levens
Mr. Harold Lemons
Rev. John W. Settlemyre*

1959 Board of Trustee Members Elected by Southern Conference to Expand Board from Twelve to Sixteen

*Mr. H. Jack Faw
Mr. Lewis Patterson*

*Mrs. J. Lincoln (Ruth) Link
Mr. Vernon E. Lewis*

Other Officers Vice President (Vice Chairperson)

1957 — 1974, 2001	<i>John W. Settlemlyre</i>
1975 — 1976	<i>Claude S. Abernethy, Jr.</i>
1977 — 82, 1994 — 95	<i>Jack H. Frank</i>
1983 — 1984	<i>Charles L. Thompson</i>
1995	<i>J. Ray Hunter</i>
1986	<i>Albert M. Allran</i>
1987	<i>Bobby R. Bonds</i>
1988 — 1989	<i>James K. Ramborger</i>
1990	<i>F. Michael Hooper</i>
1991 — 1992	<i>J. T. Baxter Morton</i>
1993	<i>Jamie T. Fonville</i>
1996 — 1997, 2000	<i>Thomas K. Tiemann</i>
1998	<i>Albert L. Lofland, Jr.</i>
1999	<i>J. Ray Deal</i>

Secretary

1956 — 1961	<i>Mrs. Hiram (Margaret) Davis</i>
1962 — 1965	<i>Mrs. J. L. (Ruth) Link</i>
1966 — 1969	<i>Mrs. Joe H. (Marguerite) Leonard</i>
1970 — 1973	<i>Mrs. Van D. (Edith) Grimes</i>
1974 — 1976	<i>Roy E. Leinbach, Jr.</i>
1977 — 1981	<i>C. Boyce Sink</i>
1982 — 1983	<i>Aubrey W. Hedrick</i>
1984	<i>Mrs. Winfred (Jolene C.) Bray</i>
1985 — 1986	<i>Clarence E. Pierce, Jr.</i>
1989 — 1990	<i>John W. Sellers</i>
1991 — 1992	<i>Earl F. Jones</i>
1993 — 1998	<i>Mrs. Charles (Viola W.) Mitchell</i>
1999 — 2000	<i>J. Richard Edens</i>
2001	<i>Mark Burns</i>

Treasurer

1956 — 1957	<i>J. Yorke Peeler</i>
1958 — 1959	<i>Verne Blackwelder</i>
1960 — 1967	<i>Willie Everhart</i>
1968 — 1976	<i>R. Walker Geitner</i>
1977	<i>Mrs. Henry McDowell</i>
1978 — 1980	<i>Frank Clapp</i>
1981 — 1986	<i>Roy E. Leinbach, Jr.</i>
1987	<i>Albert M. Allran</i>
1988 — 92, 1995 — 99	<i>Dwight L. Hedrick, Jr.</i>
1993	<i>Lester W. Stocks</i>
1994	<i>Gregory M. Alcorn</i>
2000	<i>Charles W. Moss</i>
2001	<i>Gregory A. Hedrick</i>

Section IV

≡ The Ministry ≡

The ministry of United Church Retirement Homes helps enhance the quality of life of older adults by providing retirement facilities and programs of outreach into the wider community.

The vision of UCRH was, from the time it was only a dream, to provide services to all of the areas of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ. It was so stated in the purposes of UCRH in the Articles of Incorporation:

"To establish, build, and operate several facilities across the geographical boundaries of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ, ministering to the needs of the aging population of that area but at all times, however, keeping in mind the necessity of providing a continuum of care with residential, custodial, and nursing services."

It was stated by J. W. Abernethy, Sr., the original primary benefactor of this ministry, at one of the initial dinners being held to raise money for the project, "We need to raise all of the money we can so as to build more than one home."

This vision has been kept in front of those persons challenged to help carry on this ministry by setting it forth in the mission statement, "The ministry shall enhance the quality of life by providing retirement facilities ..."

The vision was also to reach out beyond the priority of living opportunities and nursing care at given locations to minister to the physical, mental, social and spiritual needs or concerns of older adults. This ministry was to reach out to the wider community, where people live, and respond to needs. Again it was stated in the purposes of the Articles of Incorporation:

"To design and carry on a program of care that is designated to minister to the whole person ... to establish and carry on a program of charity in which the Corporation will be enabled to reach out and provide its services to needy and deserving members of the Conference community who would not otherwise be able to afford the same ... to take such other steps as the Board of Directors deems requisite and necessary to carry out such of its general purposes as are permitted by law to non-profit corporations."

It is also stated in the mission statement: "The ministry enhances the quality of life by providing ... programs of outreach into the wider community."

In 2001 UCRH can boast of two full-service retirement communities and the third under construction to be opened for occupancy sometime around the middle of 2002.

These continuing care retirement communities are:

Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C.

Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C.

Lake Prince Center, Suffolk, Va.

These are model retirement communities that will continue to provide a secure and inviting environment for older adults far into the future. They will provide quality living opportunities and nursing care at affordable rates as well as support for the outreach programs of UCRH. They are designed structurally and programmatically to stay on the cutting edge of the retirement industry, challenging staff and the persons who live in these communities to discover what it means to live full and meaningful lives.

Programs of outreach have always occupied a major portion of time and decision making within the corporate structure of UCRH. They have reached a very visible position in this ministry and will probably be limited in the future only by imagination and resources. There would seem to be increasing opportunities for reaching out in significant ways to help provide meaningful programs to the wider community where the number of older adults is increasing and people are living longer and healthier. UCRH, with its fine retirement facilities, its willingness to create models to meet current situations, its financial base and its wealth of experience, is in a wonderful position to be able to respond to needs and grow in ministry as it strives to be faithful to its vision.

Given here is a brief historical accounting of the thirty year ministry of UCRH. It presents information about the three continuing care retirement communities and of the many efforts of UCRH to reach out into the wider community in response to the needs of older adults.

Retirement Facilities

Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C.



First building of J.W. Abernethy Retirement Home, Newton, N.C.

Abernethy Center is located south of Newton, N.C. on N.C. Highway 16. The first building of this continuing care retirement community was a forty-eight bed "Home for the Aged" constructed in 1971.

It was the realization of a dream proposed to the Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and later supported by the successor judicatory, the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ. It is situated on the farm of William A. and Juanita A. Morrison, parents of Maye Morrison Abernethy. The corporate office of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. is located on the same campus in a structure built at the same location as the original farmhouse and built to model the farmhouse.

1965 — J.W. Abernethy and Maye Morrison Abernethy donated land and pledged to match money contributions received from other sources of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ. By January 1971, churches, individuals and corporations had contributed \$405,906. Believing that this was one of the finest projects they had supported in their lifetime, the Abernethys matched this amount and to this original effort on the Abernethy campus, probably gave in excess of \$500,000 towards this first building. The project was known for the first few years as United Church Retirement Home, and then in 1977 it was designated by the Board as J.W. Abernethy, Sr. Retirement Center.

1970 — Rev. C. Philip Laucks was called as the first Administrator by a Search Committee chaired by Rev. Roy E. Leinbach, Jr. A building designed by Vernon C. Lewis was constructed by Herman-Sipe Construction Co. of Conover, N.C., at a cost of approximately \$1.3 million.

1971 — The realized dream of a "Home for the Aged" for the people of Southern Conference was dedicated on Oct. 31, 1971, although the first residents had moved into the building in August. The building consisted of five residential wings, a dining area that doubled as a chapel, a craft room and a variety of offices and common spaces. A maintenance building which housed the emergency generator, boiler and water supply was also part of the original construction project.

It was a uniquely constructed building and ahead of its time for a retirement/nursing center in that all of the resident rooms had sloped ceilings with exterior views, giving the feeling of much more spacious rooms than they were and providing very pleasant living areas. Space and interior design were enhanced by the utility pipes being located in tunnels under the building.

1976 — A skilled nursing wing consisting of thirty licensed beds was added to the original building with financing provided through the Farmers Home Administration. In this same year Rev. Laucks resigned to answer a call to become Executive Director of United Church Homes of Ohio. Rev. Lawrence N. Strunk, who had been serving as Executive Director of Uplands Retirement Center at Pleasant Hill, Tenn., became the new Administrator.

1978 — A 19-acre piece of property, south from J.W. Abernethy Center on Highway 16, was contributed to UCRH by the Barringer Estate. This gift came as the result of the fine home atmosphere and loving care the center provided for a family member. The timber was marketed from the property to Cronland Warp Roll Co. for \$26,000. This property was sold much later (1996) to Mr. Joel Shaw. Joel was at the time the director of maintenance of the center.



Architect's sketch of proposed building, J.W. Abernethy Retirement Home, Newton, N.C.



First cottage, J.W. Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C.



First duplex, J.W. Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C.

time similar to what was being projected for J.W. Abernethy Center. Most centers were being totally constructed with amenities before being occupied by residents. This center was being developed as units were marketed and thus without a large outlay of up-front capital. In many instances the residents were paying for the units as they were constructed.

1982 — Sixteen free-standing apartments, in three clusters of four, were constructed along with common space for village activities and meals. This area where residents met for fellowship and meetings became known as The Commons.

There was also in this grouping office space for an administrative person to relate to the independent living residents in The Village, helping respond to their needs and helping build community. These were numbered the 200 apartments. These apartments were designed by Reinhardt and Smith Architects of Newton and were constructed by Yount Construction Co. of Newton.

1984 — An agreement was reached with the City of Newton to bring a sewer line to the center with United Church Retirement Home sharing one third of the cost. This allowed the center to close the on-site sewer plant which demanded a lot of attention because of increased maintenance. New emphasis was put on recruitment, training and placement of volunteers. Mrs. Jo Anne Flick had been employed as village coordinator, and since she had experience in the field of volunteerism she was asked to help with the volunteer program. A program was initiated with the local Department of Social Services for persons with such offenses as DWI, who were required to do community service to work around the campus. Effort was also made to strengthen the long-term volunteer program with the Board for Homeland Ministries of the United Church of Christ. An apartment was made available through a gift from a resident where long-term volunteers could live during their time of service and thereby become a meaningful part

1980 — A master plan for the 89 acres of the J.W. Abernethy, Sr. Center was completed by Newman, Calloway, Johnson, Van Etten, and Winfree, architects from Winston-Salem, N.C. and approved by the Board of Directors. Following this approval, finances were arranged and the roads, utilities and a walking bridge were constructed to enable the retirement center to move into the next phase of development, the adding of independent living units.

1981 — A cottage in memory of Myrtle Smyre Rowe and a duplex in memory of Lura Abernethy Rader were added to begin what became known as The Village. Thomas and Mary Graham Mackintosh from Elon College, N.C., were the first occupants of the cottage.

Mrs. Ruth Dillinger of Winston-Salem and Einer and Ethel Anderson from Indiana by way of Hendersonville, N.C., were the first occupants of the duplex. It was difficult to entice the first residents to move into The Village, but once there were occupants on the campus as independent living residents, others began to see the advantage of this style of retirement living and the pressure was on for the construction of more units. The first Policy and Procedure Manual for The Village was compiled and approved. The manual was basically developed by the staff of the center since there were few other retirement communities at that



200 Apartments, J.W. Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C.

of the Abernethy family. From this point on, there was nearly always a long-term volunteer serving on the campus.

1985 — A new wing was added to the health care building and became known as G-Wing. This wing added sixteen private rooms as well as an on-campus laundry. It also added a large meeting room and much needed storage. The health care unit now numbered thirty skilled nursing beds, seventy-four intermediate nursing beds, and thirty-two "home for the aging" beds. This new G-Wing was dedicated Nov. 24, 1985, and at this time the health care unit was named the Clapp-Leinbach Nursing Unit in honor of Frank L. Clapp and Roy E. Leinbach, Jr. for their dedication and determination in helping to bring the United Church Retirement Home into being.

This same year the Maye Morrison Abernethy will was settled and \$2 million was made available for the future expansion of this campus. As part of the will settlement United Church Retirement Home was able to purchase an additional 74 acres of land, which had been part of the original Morrison farm and had been transferred to the nephews of Maye Morrison Abernethy. These 74 acres were purchased for \$184,000 as part of the agreed-upon settlement. With the potential now for this Continuing Care Retirement Community to develop into a model retirement community, it was the decision to refer to it in the future as Abernethy Center of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc.

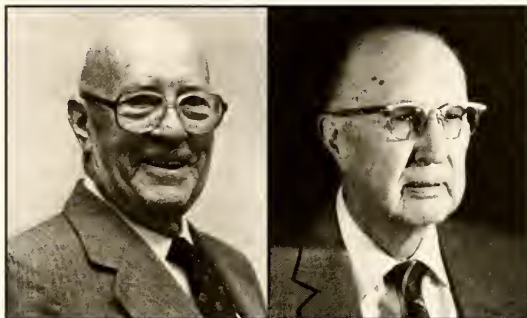
1982-1986 — Additional cottages were constructed on Geitner Avenue and were numbered the 300s. Thirteen duplexes were constructed (twenty-six units) and were numbered the 400s.

These units were marketed as they were constructed and occupied almost immediately upon their completion. Many were designed according to the needs and desires of the residents to whom they had been marketed, and paid for by them as they were constructed.

The Village was quickly taking shape and it seemed as if the demand for independent living units increased every time a new resident moved into The Village. The growth of The Village precipitated other changes on the campus. A major construction project was undertaken to improve the nursing unit and add a variety of other living opportunities to the campus.



G-Wing of Health Care Unit, J.W. Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C.



Roy E. Leinbach (left) and Frank L. Clapp (right).



Cottage donated by Dewey Houston, a local industrialist and member of Trinity UCC, Conover, N.C.

1986 — A new master plan for Abernethy Center was developed with the help of Freeman-White Associates, an architectural firm from Charlotte, N.C. It was adopted and approved by the County Planning and Zoning Board. The plan was quite inclusive, with all of the needed components for providing a secure and quality living environment for older adults. It even provided plans to connect in creative ways with the wider community by providing a commercial corner where someday perhaps a shopping area and medical complex could be constructed. Mr. Edwin Rogers of Hickory, N.C., was chairman of the Newton Operations Committee and made the presentation to the board for these important expansion plans.



500 Apartments, Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C.

More and more residents sought apartment-style living both because it was more affordable than duplexes and cottages and because it was more conducive to developing a community spirit. Eighteen new apartments were constructed during this year as well as a new maintenance building and garage. The apartments were numbered the 500s and became known as the 500 circle.

Mrs. Betty Bicknell from South Dakota came to the center as a one-year volunteer through the Board for Homeland Ministries of United Church of Christ. She contributed much in helping to develop a number of programs at the center, one of which was helping to get the Gift and Thrift Shop started

for the corporation. She endeared herself to many of the residents, who in turn encouraged and helped her become a resident herself in 1994.

The Rev. William Griffiths, through a special arrangement, was engaged as an on-campus Chaplain. He moved to the center with his wife and mother and remained in the position of chaplain until 1995 when he retired. He contributed much to the spiritual life of the campus as well as sharing his talent as an artist with the residents by teaching classes in art and providing a great deal of art work for display around the center.

A new contract for independent living residents was developed known as a Use-for-Life Agreement. It was designed to meet the needs of the times by using language and concepts that would help avoid ad valorem taxation and would form a good working relationship between the corporation and the resident. It provided for the resident to be able to live in the chosen independent living unit for the rest of his/her life. At this point in the development of the Use-For-Life Agreement each agreement often was a little different from others, since many of those coming to live at the center were paying for their chosen units as they were being constructed.

1987 — New vehicles were purchased for use by staff and residents. These were purchased with money from the Maye Morrison Abernethy bequest. The vehicles included a truck, a bus and two vans, one equipped with a wheel-chair lift.

A Certificate of Need application was made to the state Division of Facility Services to add to the retirement center a variety of living opportunities and amenities in a single building to respond more adequately to the growing needs of older adults. This would also provide space for such new models as a medical adult day care unit and a clinic or infirmary. The CON was approved and construction began on what was to be known as the Residential Mall. It was to be called the Residential Mall because it was then a "one of a kind" building which offered a wide range of options to older adults for living opportunities as well as for services.

This construction project provided for a new kitchen for food preparation for the whole campus, a new dining room for independent living and assisted living residents, a medical model adult day care licensed for as many as fifty-two participants, an eleven-bed clinic, spa, beauty shop, bank, exercise room, activity room and chapel, chaplain's office, gift shop, snack bar, administrative wing and numerous common spaces where persons could gather for conversation and fellowship. The residential component included forty efficiency apartments, twenty-two residential rooms, and eighteen licensed "home for the aging" rooms. The Residential Mall was to be connected to the Clapp-Leinbach Nursing Unit.

1988 — Frances Setzer, a resident and long-time friend of United Church Retirement Home, left 20 percent of her estate "for capital improvements of Abernethy Center." Frances had served on the Abernethy Center Operations Council. The Board of Directors designated this generous contribution to go towards the construction of a much needed community building where independent residents could gather for fellowship and creative activities. The Commons of the 200-apartment circle was fast becoming overcrowded. The growth that was taking place at Abernethy Center and within the retirement industry prompted the opening of the first marketing office, making the approach to independent living residents more professional and formal.



Residential Mall, Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C.

The Grace Isenhour property on Claremont Road which backed up against United Church Retirement Homes' property was purchased, thinking this might give entrance into the rear of the property off of Claremont Road. It was the thinking of the board that perhaps they should purchase any of the properties that came up for sale on Claremont Road that border the Abernethy Center property.

A petition was filed with the City of Newton to have J.W. Abernethy Center taken into the city as a satellite annexation so the water and sewer lines on the campus would be maintained by the city. This was completed with the assurance by the City of Newton that they would treat the center as a church-related, not-for-profit entity.

An agreement was signed with First Citizens Bank in August of this year to open a full-service branch bank in the Residential Mall.

1990-91 — A Certificate of Need was awarded to UCRH to add forty certified Medicare/Medicaid nursing beds and thirty-six life care nursing beds to the Clapp-Leinbach Nursing unit. Two wings were added to the nursing unit and a new entrance was constructed so persons could enter the unit without going through the Residential Mall. The addition of the two wings increased the long-term health care beds to a total of one hundred seventy four, with the thirty-six beds being designated specifically for residents from the independent living units and one wing designated for Alzheimer's residents. This made the Clapp-Leinbach Nursing Unit one of the largest in western North Carolina, and Abernethy Center one of the most innovative continuing care retirement communities in the state. Retirement communities were becoming a leading industry in North Carolina, and Abernethy Center was helping to set the standard by modeling new living opportunities and creative programming.

1989 — The Residential Mall was dedicated on Sept. 10, 1989. It was constructed by Hickory Construction Co. of Hickory and financed through an arrangement for a construction and short-term loan from First Union Bank in the amount of \$5 million. The Residential Mall was connected to the health care unit so that there was easy access and persons living in one section or the other could visit back and forth.



First Citizens Branch Bank, Residential Mall, Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C.



Memorial Garden, Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C.

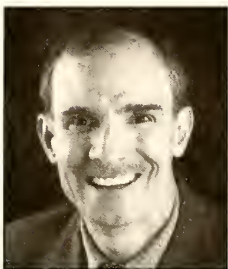
1991 — Through an initial gift in memory of Mrs. Elva Clifford, one of the oldest residents of the Center who died at the age of 102, a memorial garden was designed and constructed. The memorial garden, for the interment of ashes, was a welcome addition to the campus. It was constructed as an outdoor worship area where people could gather for services to celebrate the lives of loved ones or just sit and meditate on the beauty and wonder of God's creation. The spaces for ashes are open to residents and their families, to employees and their families, and to volunteers such as board members.

1991-92 — Six new duplexes, twelve units to be known as the 600s, were marketed and constructed. This increased the number of residents in The Village to over one hundred.

1992 -- Rev. Kenneth E. Webb from Denver, Colo., was employed as Administrator and came on campus in September. It was discovered shortly after his coming to work that he had a brain tumor. He was taken to Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem and in November was flown back to his home where he died shortly thereafter.

1992-93 -- A program was established with the Department of Social Services to provide shelter for abused adults, for which Abernethy Center in 1996 received a National Community Service Award from the American Association of Non-Profit Homes.

In this same time frame a program was established with Hospice of Catawba Valley to provide "a supportive setting for responding to families and patients" needing some respite or convalescent care.



*Steve T. Paterson,
Administrator*

1993 -- Mr. Steve Paterson, a very skilled and capable administrator from Glendale, Calif., became Administrator of the center. He had worked for the Presbyterian Homes of Southern California before coming to Abernethy Center.

Betty Bicknell, who was serving a second time as a long-term volunteer, was presented an award by the Council of Health and Human Services as the Volunteer of the Year from benevolent institutions across the United Church of Christ.

1995-97 -- Roads and utilities were constructed to complete Shuford Circle Drive and the duplexes in the 700s were marketed and prepared for occupancy.

1995 -- Chaplain William Griffiths and Ms. Lucille Goodson were honored for their years of service to the ministry of UCRH. Plaques were presented to them at the August Board of Directors

meeting on the occasion of their retirements.

1998 -- A new cul-de-sac off of the eastern end of Shuford Circle Drive to be known as Sink Lane, was constructed, and four duplexes and five cottages (thirteen new units) were marketed and prepared for occupancy. These units were to be known as the 800s, with the road named in honor of Mr. Larry Sink who served as Director of Nursing of the health care unit for twenty-three years. (1974-1997) Sink Lane and the new duplexes on this circle were dedicated Dec. 12, 1998.



*Donald Flick, CEO, with Jamie Fonville, President, honoring
Chaplain Griffiths and Hostess Lucille Goodson.*

Special Recognition:

The following streets on the campus are named for individuals who contributed much towards the establishment of this nonprofit, church-related, continuing care retirement community.

Leonard Avenue -- named for the Rev. Lawrence A. Leonard who served as chairman of the first committee that was organized to consider the establishment of a "Home for the Aged" in the Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. He served as president of the board from 1956 through 1974. He was then elected an emeritus member of the board.

Geitner Avenue -- named for Mr. R. Walker Geitner from Hickory, N.C. who served as treasurer of United Church Retirement Home from 1968-1976. He was president of First National Bank of Hickory at the time the initial building was constructed and was very instrumental in helping to provide the financing. Walker died in 2001.

Shuford Circle Drive -- named for Mr. Adrian Shuford, Jr. of Conover, N.C., a dedicated churchman and local industrialist, who was one of the early contributors and supporters of this ministry. He served as a member of the Board of Directors and of the Abernethy Operational Council. Adrian died in 2001.

Strunk Court -- named for Rev. Lawrence N. Strunk who served as the second Administrator from 1976-1982. He then became Executive Director of the expanding corporation of UCRH. He was dedicated to helping keep the ministry of UCRH closely related to the United Church of Christ.

Flick Lane -- named for Rev. Donald P. Flick who served as the third Administrator from 1982-1984. He then became Executive Director of UCRH and led the corporation through a period of phenomenal growth. He helped establish Abernethy Village as well as motivating and guiding major campus construction, including the Residential Mall and the expansion and renovation of the nursing component. He retired in the fall of 1997, at which time he was elected Executive Director Emeritus of UCRH.

Administrative Leadership

Administrators:

1970 — 1976	<i>Rev. C. Philip Laucks, Administrator</i>
1976 — 1982	<i>Rev. Lawrence N. Struck, Administrator</i>
1982 — 1984	<i>Rev. Donald P. Flick, Administrator</i>
1984 — 1990	<i>Rev. Van D. Grimes, Administrator</i>
1990 — 1991	<i>Rev. W. Robert Elliot, Administrator</i>
1992	<i>Rev. Kenneth E. Webb, Administrator (Died with brain tumor before he was able to assume much responsibility)</i>
1992 — 1993	<i>Mr. C. Shuford Abernethy III, Interim Administrator</i>
1993	<i>Mr. Isaac Kubn, Interim Administrator</i>
1993 — Present	<i>Mr. Stephen T. Paterson, Vice President of Administration</i>

Other Administrative Staff:

1984 — 1993	<i>Mrs. Jo Anne Flick, Administrative Assistant</i>
1991 — 1992	<i>Rev. Randall Brakemeyer, Health Care Administrator</i>
1994 — 1996	<i>Mrs. Mary Wesley, Assistant Administrator</i>
1996 — Present	<i>Mrs. Michelle Roseman, Health Care Administrator</i>

Employees Who Have Served Twenty or More Years:

<i>Frances Bell</i>	<i>Employed</i>	<i>10/18/82</i>
<i>Jaydeana Galloway</i>	<i>Employed</i>	<i>08/18/75</i>
<i>Linda Goble</i>	<i>Employed</i>	<i>08/22/81</i>
<i>Joyce Goforth</i>	<i>Employed</i>	<i>06/18/79</i>
<i>Glenda Hinson</i>	<i>Employed</i>	<i>04/26/76</i>
<i>Dorothy Hoyle</i>	<i>Employed</i>	<i>12/19/77</i>
<i>Brenda Mull</i>	<i>Employed</i>	<i>09/05/78</i>
<i>Joel Shaw</i>	<i>Employed</i>	<i>01/03/77</i>
<i>Evelyn Sbook</i>	<i>Employed</i>	<i>12/03/71</i>
<i>Marlene Snipes</i>	<i>Employed</i>	<i>04/26/76</i>
<i>Mary Stallings</i>	<i>Employed</i>	<i>10/18/72</i>
<i>Beth Trouille</i>	<i>Employed</i>	<i>05/05/80</i>

First Operational Advisory Committee (1973):

Rev. Roy E. Leinbach, Jr.
Mrs. John M. (Carolyn) Abernethy
Mr. Manley K. Fuller
Mrs. Van D. (Edith) Grimes
Mr. Frank L. Clapp
Mr. H. Jack Faw
Mr. Adrian L. Shuford, Jr.
Mrs. Prue H. Jones
Mr. Claude S. Abernethy, Jr.

First Residents at United Church Retirement Home (1971) (Abernethy Center):

<i>Maude P. George</i>	<i>08/16/71</i>
<i>Rena H. Bolick</i>	<i>08/16/71</i>
<i>Otto and Florine Hartsoe</i>	<i>08/16/71</i>
<i>Lucy E. Cannon</i>	<i>08/17/71</i>
<i>Sue B. Carpenter</i>	<i>08/18/71</i>
<i>John L. Lyerly, Sr.</i>	<i>08/18/71</i>

First Residents in Abernethy Village (1981-1982, Abernethy Center):

<i>Einer and Ethel Anderson</i>	<i>10/21/81 Duplex</i>
<i>Ruth Dillinger</i>	<i>12/21/81 Duplex</i>
<i>Thomas and Mary Graham Mackintosh</i>	<i>Cottage</i>
<i>Andre and Frances DePorry</i>	<i>04/15/82 Duplex</i>
<i>Rebecca Chumley</i>	<i>04/29/82 Duplex</i>
<i>Lea Hodges</i>	<i>08/09/82 Apartment</i>
<i>Earl and Ruth Abernethy</i>	<i>08/11/82 Apartment</i>
<i>Harvey and Verna Krouse</i>	<i>08/25/82 Cottage</i>
<i>Raymond and Edith Desjardins</i>	<i>10/26/82 Apartment</i>
<i>Margaret Smith</i>	<i>11/01/82 Duplex</i>
<i>Archibald and Jean Lawson</i>	<i>02/15/82 Apartment</i>
<i>Ada Beatty</i>	<i>12/14/82 Duplex</i>
<i>Carrie Martin</i>	<i>12/16/82 Apartment</i>

First Residents in Residential Mall (Dedicated Sept. 10, 1989, Abernethy Center):

Reid and Kathbryn Poovey
Margaret Kirk
Anna Lee Veatch
Mary Ballew
Frank L. Clapp



First residents of Residential Mall, Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C.
Front row, left to right, Kathbryn Poovey and Margaret Kirk.
Back row, left to right, Anna Lee Veatch, Reid Poovey, Mary Ballew and Frank Clapp.

Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C.

From the time it was realized that the dream of a "Home for the Aged" in North Carolina under the sponsorship of the United Church of Christ was going to become a reality, there was talk of more than one facility.

Since the first facility was located in Catawba County as the result of the generosity of Maye and J.W. Abernethy, it seemed reasonable that the second unit, if there was to be one, should be located in Davidson County, which had the largest number of United Church of Christ congregations in the state. It might be considered providential that in 1976 Mrs. Anise Shuler left 47 acres of land to United Church Retirement Home through her will, acreage which was strategically located and suitable for a continuing care retirement community. It was near the city limits of Thomasville and only a short distance from the new Interstate 85. This made the land readily accessible from Lexington and other surrounding cities. Although sewer and water lines were not servicing the property, both were available within a reasonable distance.



Aerial view, Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C.

Anise Shuler had been a member of Emanuel United Church of Christ, within close proximity to the site. Several ministers who were deeply interested in the growth and ministry of United Church Retirement Home had served this congregation and undoubtedly had sowed the seeds for this bequest.

The three ministers who perhaps had the most influence were Rev. Lawrence A. Leonard, Rev. Wayne Fouts, and Rev. Aubrey Hedrick, all of whom served on the Board of Directors of UCRH at different times. The property as willed to United Church Retirement Home had some small incumbrances on it, but these were quickly settled. Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kennedy purchased an additional parcel of land which bordered the property and presented it to UCRH, which greatly improved the use of the site for a retirement community. Plans quickly got underway to develop a total life care center with a variety of components. The two major hurdles to overcome before construction could begin was Certificate of Need approval from the state Division of Facility Services and a way to finance the facility.



Entrance Sign, Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C.

While Abernethy Center was constructed as money became available and independent-living units were marketed, it was evident that the retirement industry had come of age and this second center should be financed and constructed in such a way as to function as a life-care facility from the time it opened. In 1978 Newman, Callaway, Johnson, and Winfree, an architectural firm from Winston-Salem, was engaged to prepare a master plan for the site. This plan was used to promote the center and encourage churches and individuals to give support to this dream.

Because of its location, the facility was referred to from the very outset as Piedmont Center and the name was adopted without much in-depth consideration or objection.

Had there been a large benefactor for the project or some outcry for a more descriptive or church-related name the outcome may have been different, but Piedmont Center took on a life of its own and now, through more than fifteen years of its history, has come to symbolize quality retirement living in the Thomasville-Lexington-High Point area.

In 1981 and 1982 a capital funds campaign was conducted across the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ and approximately \$400,000 was raised as seed money to fund the up-front costs of a new retirement community. In 1985 a major bequest was received by UCRH which helped provide a favorable financial condition for the corporation. It was possible as the result of this improved financial condition to finance the project through tax-exempt bonds. The Piedmont Operational Advisory Committee, under the leadership of Mr. C. Boyce Sink, a real estate agent and dedicated churchman from Lexington, worked hard and pushed hard to make Piedmont Center a reality. Ground was broken for the project on June 2, 1985, and the total first phase of the center was dedicated and ready for occupancy on Sept. 21, 1986. Independent-living residents actually began to move into the apartments as early as June of 1986.

1976 — Property for a continuing care retirement community was received by United Church Retirement Home from the estate of Mrs. Anise Shuler. The property is located near Thomasville, just a short way off Interstate 85 at Lake Road Exit 102.

1978 — A Master Plan for the 49 acre site was prepared and the process was begun to have the property zoned for use for a continuing care retirement community through the Davidson County Planning and Zoning Board.

1982 — The land was opened and roads and utilities were started with a bank loan of \$150,000. It was hoped that this would encourage significant contributions toward the project.



Shuler site, Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C.



Opening and grading of site at Kendall Mill Road, Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C. Left to right: Roy E. Leimbach, Jr., C. Boyce Sink, Lawrence N. Strunk, Max D. Bumgarner and Aubrey W. Hedrick.

An application was submitted to HUD for a housing project on the Piedmont site, which was approved but not funded. This was done under a separate corporation known as Piedmont Housing, Inc.

Second UCC Church of Lexington pledged to help raise \$100,000 toward a memorial for Dr. A. Odell Leonard, who was the founding pastor of Second Church and a strong supporter of a "Home for the Aged" in the Davidson County area. The rotunda of the health care building, constructed in 1986, was dedicated in memory of Dr. Leonard, who was a brother to Rev. Lawrence A. Leonard, the major proponent for the establishment of United Church Retirement Home, Inc.

1983 — Approval was given by the Medical Care Commission of North Carolina for issuing tax-exempt bonds to finance the first phase of Piedmont Center.

John McGee and Company of Winston-Salem, was engaged at a cost of \$40,000 to give oversight to the bond-issue process and to proceed with the private placement of the bonds which were eventually placed with North Carolina National Bank.

A Certificate of Need was filed with the Division of Facility Services of the state for the construction of a continuing care retirement community with one hundred and twenty-eight independent living units, sixty-four Home for the Aging beds and thirty-two nursing beds to be designated as life-care beds. Every effort was made to have some of the beds certified as Medicare/Medicaid so the nursing home would always be able to reach out and service the wider community. The Certificate of Need was approved, but without any certified Medicare/Medicaid beds that would be open to the public. The beds could be filled with private-pay residents from the wider community during the first three years of operation. They were then to be reserved for people living on the campus of the retirement center.



Signing documents for Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C. Left to right, Max Bumgarner, Donald Flick, Boyce Sink, Glenn Sutherly and Mike Neuman.

1984 — Seidman and Seidman, a CPA firm from Chicago, was engaged to conduct a feasibility study for the bond issue, and Newman-Jones, an architectural firm that grew out of the firm that prepared the master plan, was employed to design the buildings for the project. J. H. Allen Construction Co. of Ashboro, N.C., was chosen as the general contractor.

Many local persons, interested in seeing this dream become a reality, helped with the marketing of the facility so the required 60 percent of the units could be marketed as quickly as possible and the bond financing could be put in place. This approach was taken, instead of hiring a marketing firm, in order to save a substantial amount of money. One such person who helped with marketing was Mrs. Ginny Lou Byerly, who served on the board and was the chairperson for the long-range planning committee.

Groundbreaking services for the project were held on Nov. 4, 1984. The speaker for the occasion was The Rev. Lawrence N. Strunk, the former Executive Director of UCRH.

1985 — During construction of the health care unit a spark from a welding torch set fire to one of the wings of the unit, destroying a major part of it and setting the project back by a few weeks.

1986 — The first phase of construction was completed and dedication services were held on Sept. 21, 1986. The buildings consisted of a health care unit with beauty shop and clinic, a kitchen and dining room to service the whole campus, a laundry and a variety of common spaces, a maintenance building, six cottages, twenty-nine two-bedroom apartments, five one-bedroom apartments, and a large common area with a kitchen to provide activity space and fellowship area for the independent-living residents.

1988 — A Convalescent and Respite Care program was introduced and a brochure was printed to help market this unique program.

The program made nursing-home beds available to persons needing convalescent care on a short term, private-pay basis. It also made beds available for respite care for persons whose caregivers needed a break or needed to be out of town. The maximum stay was for thirty days. This was primarily a service to the wider community.

An application for available HUD units in the Davidson County area was once again made through Piedmont Housing, Inc., but the project was not approved for funding.

1988-92 — Plans were approved to add independent-living units as they were marketed and finances could be arranged. Frank Circle, named in honor of Jack H. Frank, was added and over a period of four years, six duplexes (twelve units) and four cottages were constructed.

1989 — The Board of Directors made a decision to pursue the construction of a Residential Mall and an additional apartment complex in order to increase the number of independent living units on the campus and thereby hopefully improve the bottom line of the operating budget. It became evident after the first phase was up and operating that the staff could easily carry on the necessary administrative

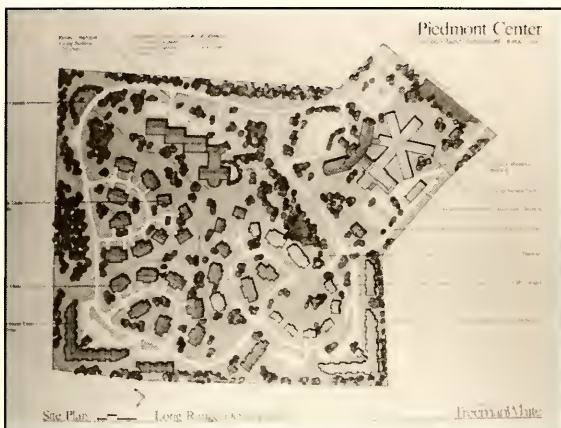


Front of first unit of Health Care Building, Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C.



Frank Circle, Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C.

responsibilities and programming for more residents than the original CCRC was designed to accommodate. This was a lesson learned by experience because up to this point there had been few studies to indicate what was the best mix for a financially feasible operation. In the process of planning for the second phase of construction it was discovered that the original oil tank supplying fuel for the heating system had been dropped when installed and was leaking oil into the ground. A major cleanup operation had to be carried out before any additional construction could be financed. The contractor assumed responsibility for most of the work and Piedmont Center had filed all of the necessary papers to be included in a state fund designed to help with such cleanup. Even so, there were out-of-pocket expenses for a variety of legal and other matters that amounted to thousands of dollars.



Site plan, Piedmont Center, Thomasville, NC.

was several times that Piedmont Center had applied for allocated beds and had been bypassed, it was decided United Church Retirement Homes should appeal the decision and try once more to get some Medicare/Medicaid certified nursing home beds. A compromise was reached with the state instead of the issue being taken to the courts, and Piedmont Center received ten Certified Medicaid/Medicare beds and twenty additional licensed intermediate-care beds. This made the total bed count for Piedmont Center ninety-six: thirty skilled beds (ten Medicare/Medicaid Certified), twenty-four intermediate beds and forty-two "home for the aging" beds or HA beds.

1992 — Rev D. Russell Myers resigned to return to work for Baptist Homes of North Carolina, where his roots were, and C. Shuford Abernethy, III became the Administrator. There was nearly a year between Rev. Myers' leaving and the time that Mr. Abernethy could get all his responsibilities completed at the

1990 — Freeman-White Associates, an architectural firm from Charlotte, was engaged to do a master plan and prepare working drawings for the planned expansion which was to include a Residential Mall, a thirty-six unit apartment complex which became known as the Gallery Apartments, an employee dining room, a chapel/multipurpose activity area, and a renovation of the existing resident dining area to be available to independent living residents and guests.

1991 — A Certificate of Need application was submitted to the state Division of Facility Services for thirty and sixty nursing beds certified for Medicare/Medicaid that were available in Davidson County. The certificate for these beds was issued to another nursing home in the county even though Piedmont Center had the health care unit that would have only needed to be slightly renovated to accommodate the beds. Since this

corporate office to be able to move to Piedmont Center. During this interim, Ms. Betty Pfeiler, who had been Assistant Administrator at the center since it opened and was a licensed administrator, served quite ably as the acting administrator. Spectrum Marketing of Gastonia, N.C., was hired to help with the marketing of the proposed expansion with 60 of the independent units having to be marketed before the Medical Care Commission would approve the issuing of the tax-exempt bonds to finance the expansion.

1993 — A six-plex was marketed and constructed beside of the original apartment complex, which helped increase the number of independent living residents on campus and thus helped somewhat in improving the monthly financial picture.



Six-plex, Piedmont Center, Thomasville, NC.

1994 — All the necessary covenants were worked through for the issuing of bonds to finance the second phase of construction and to refinance the first phase. The tax-exempt bond closing was Oct. 12, 1994, in the amount of \$19,065,000. The cost of construction for Phase II was \$10,996,000 and \$4,788,000 was needed to retire the original bonds issued for the construction of Phase I. Groundbreaking was held on Jan. 1, 1994.

1995 — An agreement was signed with Lexington Bank to locate a branch in the foyer of the Residential Mall, just across the hall from the new chapel/multipurpose activity area.

1996 — On April 28, 1996 a special dedication service was held to celebrate the completion of Phase II of Piedmont Center with the President of the United Church of Christ, Rev. Dr. Paul Sherry, as the keynote speaker. This occasion also marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of what had now become United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. This expansion increased the variety of living opportunities on the Piedmont Center campus to:



Groundbreaking, Piedmont Center. Left to right: Donald P. Flick, Jim Bonaface, Jamie Fonville, Betty Pfeiffer, J. H. Allen, Dale Kennedy and Shuford Abernethy.

Health Care Unit	96	
Assisted Living Unit	20 (Adult Care Beds)	
Residential Mall	40 (Apartments)	
Cottages	10	
Duplexes	12 (6 Buildings)	
Sixplexes	24 (4 Buildings)	
Apartments	64	
Total Units:	Healthcare	96
	Assisted Living	20 (Adult Care)
	Independent Living	150

1997 — A co-sponsored Certificate of Need application was submitted to the state by Piedmont Center and Community General Hospital of Thomasville for one hundred nursing home beds available in Davidson County. The expenses of this application process were shared jointly by the two groups. A corporation known as Lakeview Terrace, Inc. Health and Rehabilitation Center was formed. The facility was to be located on land adjacent to the hospital and managed by Piedmont Center. To the disappointment of many this application was not approved. This alliance was a model that would have provided some wonderful new health care opportunities to the Davidson County area.

1998 — A 9.6-acre tract of land and a brick house were purchased adjacent to Piedmont Center. An interesting sideline is that this house was built by Van D. and Edith Grimes and was where they began their marriage. Both Van and Edith in later years were very much involved in the work and ministry of United Church Retirement Homes. Edith served as secretary of the board in the late 60s and early 70s and Van served as administrator of Abernethy Center from 1984 to 1990. This purchase was made to get additional land for the center.

1999 — A new circle of cottages and duplexes known as Flick Circle in honor of Donald P. and Jo Anne Flick was constructed. Don served as Executive Director and President of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. from 1984 through 1997. Jo Anne served on the staff at Abernethy Center for a number of years, first as Village Coordinator and then as Administrative Assistant. After her retirement in 1994 she volunteered to help organize the first resale shop operated by United Church Retirement Homes, located in Newton.



Flick Circle, Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C.

2001 — The residents produced a beautiful pictorial directory which was thought to be the first of its kind for a continuing care retirement community. The occupancy of the center reached an all-time high of two hundred and ninety nine residents, with all of the independent living units occupied and a substantial waiting list. Mrs. Linda Hunt served as director of marketing. Mr. Dale Lyles, who had been senior Vice President at Community General Hospital in Thomasville and who had been serving on the Piedmont Center Operations Council, was employed as the new Administrator. He was not a licensed nursing home administrator, but had all the skills needed for the position. Ms. Betty Pfeiler served as Administrator of record until he had successfully passed all the required tests and was licensed.

Special Recognition:

The following items at Piedmont Center pay special recognition to persons who contributed much toward the establishment of this second continuing care retirement community under the umbrella of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc.

Shuler Village and Shuler Circle Drive — named for Mrs. Anice Shuler, who made available through her will the major portion of land upon which Piedmont Center is located. She was a lifelong member of Emanuel United Church of Christ, Thomasville.

Hedrick Drive — named for the Hedrick family of which several members were active in helping to bring Piedmont Center into being. Rev. Aubrey Hedrick was a member of the Board of Directors and secretary of the corporation 1982-83. He served as pastor of Emanuel United Church of Christ and encouraged the contribution of land for the center.



Shuler Village, Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C.

Mr. Dwight L. Hedrick served on the Board of Directors and as treasurer of the corporation 1988-92 and 1995-98, and as chairman of the board in 1999. Both of these gentlemen served on a number of committees in the formative years of this ministry, as did other members of their families.

Frank Circle — named for Mr. Jack H. Frank who served on many committees in the formative years of the retirement home as well as on the Board of Directors. Being in the lumber business in the Lexington area, he contributed much in the way of skills and influence in helping this important work to grow. He served as chairperson of the Piedmont Operations Council 1986-88 and as chairperson of the Board of Directors 1996-97.



Residential Building on Hedrick Drive entering Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C.

Kennedy Court — named for Henry and Ernestine Kennedy, who were major supporters and planners of the center. Ernestine served on the Board of Directors as early as 1958, and Henry not only served on the Operations Council, but helped immeasurably in marketing during the formative years of the center. They became residents of the center in 1998, occupying a cottage on Shuler Circle.

Flick Circle — named for Donald P. Flick, who served as Executive Director during the planning and construction of Piedmont Center and his wife, Jo Anne, who helped establish the Gift and Thrift Resale Shop which services both Piedmont and Abernethy centers.

Leonard Rotunda — named for Rev. Dr. A. Odell Leonard who was one of the first ministers to suggest a home for the aged back in the early 1950s and encouraged his congregation, Second Church, Lexington, N.C., to be the first congregation in the Southern Synod to put such a project in its budget. He served on the founding Board of Trustees.

Sink Court — named for C. Boyce Sink who played a key role in the establishment of Piedmont Center and in the operations of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. He served as chairperson of the Piedmont Operations Council during the first phase of construction. He was secretary of the Board 1977-81 and president of the Board 1985-87 and 1990. He died unexpectedly of a heart attack on Dec. 23, 1991, before completing his last term as president.



Gallery Apartments, Sink Court, Piedmont Center, Thomasville, NC.

A stained-glass window located in the entrance to the Residential Mall was placed there in memory of Mr. Sink by his family and friends. This window depicts the mission statement and motto of this ministry to which he gave so unselfishly of his time and talents.

Administrative Leadership

Administrators:

1986 — 1992	Rev. D. Russell Myers, Jr., Administrator
1992	Ms. Betty A. Pfeiler, Interim Administrator
1992 — 2000	Mr. C. Shonford Abernethy, III, Administrator
2000	Mr. Richard Faught, Vice President of Administration
2000	Mr. Douglas Fleegle, Interim Administrator (Dec.-March)
2000 — 2001	Ms. Betty A. Pfeiler, Interim Administrator — Served until Mr. Lyles received his nursing home administrator license
2001 — Present	Mr. Dale Lyles, Vice President of Administration

Other Administrative Staff:

1986 — Present	Ms. Betty A. Pfeiler, Assistant Administrator and now Resident Services Administrator Betty has served in an administrative position since Piedmont Center opened in 1986. She is a capable and dedicated employee.
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Employees Who Have Served Ten or More Years:

Betty Pfeiler	Employed	06/20/86	Assistant Administrator
Ella Scott	Employed	11/17/86	CNA
Nancy Mincey	Employed	01/05/87	Personnel Office Manager
Myrtle Wallace	Employed	04/13/87	CNA
Freeda Hancock	Employed	02/10/88	LPN
Dorothy Trull	Employed	10/24/88	CNA
Brenda Moore	Employed	07/24/89	LPN
Alfred Carver	Employed	03/05/90	Maintenance
Lucinda Blesecker	Employed	11/01/90	LPN
Barbara Davis	Employed	11/05/90	Secretary
Pamela Craven	Employed	11/19/90	RN Clinic
Carolyn Spradlin	Employed	03/18/91	LPN
Louise Holsbomser	Employed	04/25/91	Dining Aide
Jeanette Wilkie	Employed	05/25/92	RN



Ms. Betty Pfeiler

First Piedmont Operational Advisory Committee (1978):

The first members were named to a Piedmont Committee by the Board of Directors of UCRH in 1977. They held their first meeting on Jan. 18, 1978, at First Reformed UCC in Lexington and organized in March of that year with C. Boyce Sink as chairman and Hazel Myers as secretary. Those persons who served on this first Operational Advisory Committee were:

<i>Mr. C. Boyce Sink, Chairman</i>	<i>Lexington, N.C.</i>
<i>Mrs. Hazel Myers, Secretary</i>	<i>Thomasville, N.C.</i>
<i>Mr. J. C. Corsbie</i>	<i>Asheboro, N.C.</i>
<i>Mr. Marcus B. Crotts</i>	<i>Winston-Salem, N.C.</i>
<i>Rev. Larry Diehl</i>	<i>High Point, N.C.</i>
<i>Mr. Jack H. Frank</i>	<i>Lexington, N.C.</i>
<i>Rev. Aubrey W. Hedrick</i>	<i>Lexington, N.C.</i>
<i>Mr. Henry Kennedy</i>	<i>Thomasville, N.C.</i>
<i>Mr. Joe H. Leonard</i>	<i>Lexington, N.C.</i>
<i>Mr. Marion M. Richards</i>	<i>Salisbury, N.C.</i>
<i>Mr. Harold Sechler</i>	<i>Kannapolis, N.C.</i>
<i>Mrs. Irwin (Allene) Smallwood</i>	<i>Greensboro, N.C.</i>
<i>Mr. Paul Stokes</i>	<i>Winston-Salem, N.C.</i>

First Residents at Piedmont Center, Health Care Unit (1986):

<i>Mae Eagle</i>	<i>10/06/86</i>
<i>Daisy Grimes</i>	<i>10/06/86</i>
<i>Esther K. Berlin</i>	<i>10/07/86</i>
<i>Evelyn Tolan</i>	<i>10/07/86</i>
<i>Louise Wilson</i>	<i>10/08/86</i>
<i>Tom Eanes</i>	<i>10/08/86</i>
<i>H. Arnold Frank</i>	<i>10/10/86</i>

First Residents at Piedmont Center, Independent Living Apartment Units (1986):

<i>Ina Grose</i>	<i>07/18/86</i>	<i>Thomasville, N.C.</i>
<i>Martha Thompson</i>	<i>07/22/86</i>	<i>Lexington, N.C.</i>
<i>Bill and Elizabeth Gall</i>	<i>07/22/86</i>	<i>Chambersburg, Pa.</i>
<i>Dot Glasnapp</i>	<i>07/22/86</i>	<i>Mt. Pleasant, N.C.</i>
<i>Louise Sutton</i>	<i>07/22/86</i>	<i>Thomasville, N.C.</i>
<i>Kate Allmond</i>	<i>07/22/86</i>	<i>Thomasville, N.C.</i>
<i>Mary Richardson</i>	<i>07/22/86</i>	<i>Thomasville, N.C.</i>
<i>Zulab Borland</i>	<i>07/22/86</i>	<i>Thomasville, N.C.</i>
<i>Louise Sink</i>	<i>07/22/86</i>	<i>Winston-Salem, N.C.</i>
<i>Ned and Maude Gibbs</i>	<i>07/30/86</i>	<i>Thomasville, N.C.</i>

First Residents at Piedmont Center, Independent Living Cottage Units (1986 — 1987):

<i>Emily Davis</i>	<i>07/18/86</i>	<i>Florida</i>
<i>Kathleen Johnson</i>	<i>08/07/86</i>	<i>Lexington, N.C.</i>
<i>Donald and Addie Rhodes</i>	<i>11/18/86</i>	<i>Silver Springs, Md.</i>
<i>Paul and Arleen Beck</i>	<i>03/31/87</i>	<i>Lexington, N.C.</i>
<i>John and Mary Fox</i>	<i>06/11/87</i>	<i>Cleveland, Ohio</i>
<i>William and June Perry</i>	<i>08/03/87</i>	<i>Greensboro, N.C.</i>

First Residents at Piedmont Center in Gallery Apartments (1995):

<i>John and Billie Harlin</i>	<i>05/03/95</i>	<i>High Point, N.C.</i>
<i>Marvin and Dorothy Tomlin</i>	<i>05/03/95</i>	<i>Atlanta, Ga.</i>
<i>John and Preddy Watson</i>	<i>05/04/95</i>	<i>Charlotte, N.C.</i>
<i>Frances Armstrong</i>	<i>05/08/95</i>	<i>High Point, N.C.</i>
<i>C.C. and Ruby Lee Grady</i>	<i>05/11/95</i>	<i>High Point, N.C.</i>
<i>Dorothy Taylor</i>	<i>05/15/95</i>	<i>Burlington, N.C.</i>

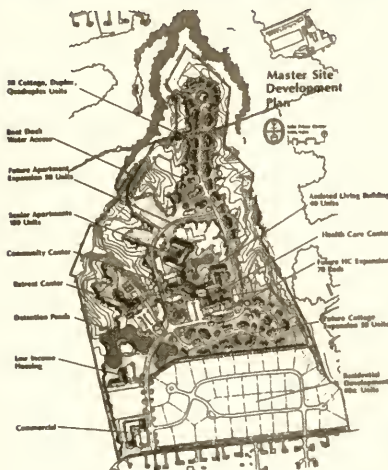
First Residents at Piedmont Center in Residential Mall (1965 — 1996):

<i>Orianna Link</i>	<i>12/01/95</i>	<i>Lexington, N.C.</i>
<i>Varena Slater</i>	<i>01/19/96</i>	<i>High Point, N.C.</i>
<i>Donald and Addie Rhodes</i>	<i>01/23/96</i>	<i>Shuler Village</i>
<i>Kate T. Allmond</i>	<i>02/01/96</i>	<i>Shuler Village</i>
<i>Len Dablgren</i>	<i>02/01/96</i>	<i>Shuler Village</i>

Lake Prince Center, Suffolk, Va.



Site and sign, Lake Prince Center, Suffolk Va.



Site plan for Lake Prince Center, Suffolk, Va.

prominent member of Suffolk Christian Church and had visited J. W. Abernethy Center in Newton, N.C. He felt there should be such a center in his area that could be claimed by and supported by the churches of the Eastern Virginia Association. His daughter, Anna Goode Turner, continues to exhibit his dedication to this ministry and has been instrumental in helping to make Lake Prince Center a reality. She plans to be one of the first residents to move into the independent living units. She has made a portrait of her mother and father available for display in a prominent place in one of the main buildings to help pay tribute to her parents for their interest and contribution to this project.

There are many persons whose names could be lifted up as having given much to help make this dream a reality and who never lost heart through many disappointments and struggles, but one that needs to be lifted up as special is Dr. Leroy Howell.

Lake Prince Center is located in Suffolk, Va. on Kings Fork Road which connects state Highway 460 leading to Richmond, with state Highways 10-32 leading to Portsmouth and Chesapeake. Construction of this continuing care retirement community got underway with groundbreaking held on Nov. 21, 1999.

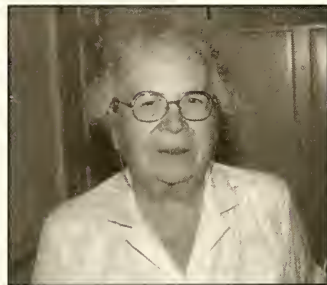
The first phase of buildings has been completed and ready for occupancy by late summer of 2002. The center is located on a beautiful 172-acre site that borders Lake Prince and is strategically located with good accessibility from all of the Tidewater area of Virginia as well as from Richmond in the north and

Emporium in the west. The center has been planned as an inclusive community with opportunities for intergenerational experiences as well as designs that integrate it with the wider community. A long struggle was required to bring this model retirement community into being, beginning with conversations for such a venture dating back to the early 1970s when the Eastern Virginia Association of the Southern Conference saw the need for a visible ministry among older adults. A committee was appointed to research the possibility of such a venture, which later aligned itself with United Church

Retirement Homes as it continued to pursue its vision. The dream of providing a place, sponsored by the United Church in the Tidewater area of Virginia, where older adults could be served and cared for was given a boost when it was learned that Zechariah Turner had provided some money in his estate for some financial assistance towards such a Center. "Z." Turner was a



Portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Z. Turner.



Anna Goode Turner



Dr. Leroy Howell, Chair of Virginia Operations Council.

Dr. Leroy Howell was on the original committee appointed by the association in the summer of 1978 to study the possibility of a retirement facility in eastern Virginia and became its chairperson at their first meeting on Nov. 7, 1978. He remained the group's chairperson after they became an acting committee of UCRH in March of 1979. He has remained the chair of this group, which is now known as Virginia Operations Council, through all the intervening years. What he says about his experience is, "It is truly amazing what has happened, what we have accomplished. Thanks be to God!" Leroy's greatest wish is that somehow money will be available "to make it more affordable and inclusive." He is further quoted as saying, "There were many periods when it seemed like the Virginia project would never overcome the problems it encountered. It was through my deep faith in the ministry of UCRH and the encouragement of people such as Dr. Donald Flick, Dr. Roy Leinbach, Boyce Sink, Jack Frank, J.T. Morton, Dwight Hedrick and many others that inspired me to continue the work necessary to bring

this wonderful ministry to Eastern Virginia. Let me continue by saying that ... none of what we see on the site today would have been possible without the dedication and tireless efforts of Don Flick."

The original feasibility study that helped determine Suffolk to be the best location for a successful retirement community was done by Howell Associates, Inc. of Washington, D.C. This marketing study, done primarily to analyze site location, stated, "It is our determination that a United Church of Christ total life retirement community in the Tidewater region is likely to receive market acceptance provided the project is built in Suffolk, Virginia, and is built in phases."

This study was done in 1988 with a contribution of \$10,000 from corporate funds of United Church Retirement Homes, and while it took the next twelve years to work through all of the political and legal matters to bring this center into being, it still seems to be the right decision. Creative planning has been done for this new center, and while the cost in terms of time and money has been far greater than anyone anticipated, it should serve the area well. It should also raise the identity of the United Church in the area and serve as a catalyst for helping to form a strong bond of mission among the some seventy local congregations. It is a project that will enhance the City of Suffolk by being located near the new site for Obici Hospital, where a growing relationship will provide the area with wonderful retirement and medical services.

Effort has been made to incorporate some unique features into the long-range plans for Lake Prince Center. An area is provided on the master plan for a retreat center to accommodate intergenerational experiences as well as a place where church groups can gather for special programs and fellowship. The association staff office is to be located on the campus and effort is underway to get an affordable housing project financed by HUD and subsidized by Section 8 housing. There are some lots which can be sold to the wider community and could possibly be tied into the programmatic services of the center, and a commercial corner that will over the years unite the various living opportunities of the area with one another. If the vision for this center is actively pursued it will truly be a model for other such ventures. One of the members of the planning team stated, "This project is truly a ministry. We want always to make sure we continue to see it as that, as well as all of the work of United Church Retirement Homes."

The first phase of Lake Prince Center is being financed by \$36,485,000 variable rate tax-exempt bonds with Paine Webber as the broker. This first phase will include:

- Roads and utilities to the major areas of the 172-acre site.
- 19 Cottages — 7 Duplexes (14 units)
- 96 Apartments — 36 Assisted living units
- 16 ARD units — 40 Nursing home beds
- Alzheimer's and related dementia units

This is a total of two hundred and fourteen living units along with a variety of support service and program areas.



Construction, Lake Prince Center, Suffolk, Va.

The master plan for Lake Prince Center was developed through the services of Freeman White architectural firm in Charlotte, and the working drawings and supervision have been done by Shriver and Holland architectural firm in Newport News, Va. The contractor for the project was Nielsen, Inc. from Harrisonburg, Va. Rev. C. Philip Laucks, the executive director of UCRH, devoted an extra measure of time and commitment to help make this project a reality, as did Dr. Leroy Howell, chairman of the Operations Council.

1978 — A special committee was formed "to study the feasibility of establishing a retirement home within the bounds of the Eastern Association." It held its first meeting at Suffolk Christian Church on Nov. 7, 1978. Rev. Bill Simmons, associate conference minister of Eastern Virginia Association helped initiate the meeting. Rev. Lawrence N. Strunk, Executive Director of UCRH, was invited to meet with them.

1979 — Eunice T. Moore, a UCRH board member, presented an overture to the board at their meeting on March 27, 1979, requesting that an Eastern Virginia Operational Advisory Committee be formed under the organizational structure of UCRH. The members of the study committee were to be asked to serve on this group. The request was approved and additional members were added to form a sixteen-person Operational Advisory Committee.

1980 — Meetings were held almost monthly to consider the process for beginning a retirement center and the feasibility of one sponsored by the United Church in eastern Virginia. During this year UCRH was beginning an extensive capital campaign across the Southern Conference to help finance the construction of Piedmont Center in Davidson County, N.C.

1981 — The Virginia project was recognized by United Church Retirement Homes as a challenging possibility and action was taken that money raised in Virginia, or designated for the Virginia project through the Capital Campaign in progress, would go towards the purchase of a site and the establishment of a center in Eastern Virginia.

1982 — An option was taken on an 83.6-acre site in Franklin, Va, and board action was taken to move forward with the purchase as financing could be arranged. The Executive Director informed the Operational Advisory Committee that UCRH would consider proceeding with planning for a "total life care retirement" community on that site when a title for the property was presented to the corporation that was free and clear of any debt.

1983 — Dr. Dardin N. Jones of Franklin Christian Church, Dr. Leroy Howell of Oakland Christian Church and Rev. Daniel Bowers, Pastor of Holy Neck Christian Church, along with their wives, signed a promissory note for full payment of the Franklin site and presented the deed for the property to United Church Retirement Homes. The site was known as the Branch Property and was chosen for the following reasons:

- 1. It was accessible to a variety of city services, including water, sewer and electricity.*
- 2. The land bordering the property was a mixture of single-family homes and undeveloped land and was easily accessible from nearby cities.*
- 3. There were shopping and educational opportunities within a three-mile radius.*
- 4. There was a hospital with land adjacent to the site with available nursing care.*

1984 — A master plan for the Franklin Site was prepared by Newman-Jones, an architectural firm from Winston-Salem, N.C., and through the dedicated efforts of Dr. Dardin W. Jones the site was properly zoned for a retirement center. Ms. Julia Anne Williams had been elected financial secretary for the Virginia group in February of 1982 and constantly kept the project before the various church groups at both the association and conference level.

1985 — Meetings were held with Southhampton Memorial Hospital to determine if a joint program could be developed since they had nursing home beds and it was difficult at this time to get approval in Virginia for certified nursing beds that could be eligible for Medicare/Medicaid. There was much interest in such a joint venture but the further along the discussions progressed the more the hospital seemed to want to proceed on its own.

1987 — Money continued to be raised among individuals and the churches to liquidate the debt on the Franklin site. It was announced at the February Board of Directors meeting that there was less than \$10,000 owed on the site, which originally cost \$350,000. The Board rejoiced over this news and voted to proceed with a marketing feasibility study to be conducted by J. O. Baker Co. of Atlanta, Ga.

A letter was received from Southhampton Memorial Hospital stating that it had made the decision to move ahead with a retirement village of its own on land that was very near the UCRH proposed site. It did construct a retirement village close to the hospital, which undoubtedly was inspired by the talks with UCRH.

Since the Franklin site was nearly debt-free and the hospital was planning to build some retirement housing, the board urged that two committees be formed, a Development and Finance Committee and an Alternative Site Committee.



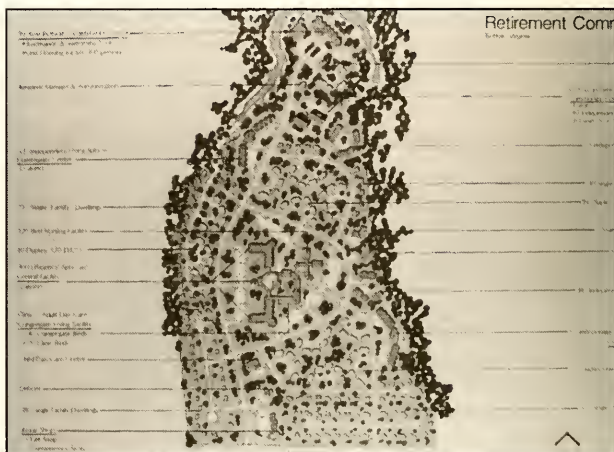
Signing contract for Feasibility Study, Lake Prince Center, Suffolk, Va. Left to right, Joe Howell, Jim Ramborger and Leroy Howell.

1988 — The J. O. Baker study reported that it was unwise to plan for an all-inclusive retirement community on the Franklin site. A limited project might be successful, but because it was discovered that Southhampton Memorial Hospital had a large number of long-term nursing beds and had plans to develop certain retirement components within the near future, this was not a suitable location for a full-service retirement community. This was a disappointment to many who had worked so hard to raise money for the site and to have it properly zoned. There was a feeling that the study was not in-depth enough to draw such sweeping conclusions, so the board, acting to cover all the bases and continue to get the support of all the persons so dedicated to having the project located in Franklin, voted to commission another study. This study was to be done by an experienced group from the Washington, D.C., area who were very involved in helping nonprofit sponsoring groups plan retirement communities. One of the instructions given to this firm, Howell Associates, was to give particular attention to sites both in Franklin and in the Suffolk area. This study also revealed that a project as

extensive as that being planned by United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. would likely not be successful in Franklin but would “receive market acceptance” if built in Suffolk. The Board now moved more deliberately to find and purchase a site in or near Suffolk, Va.

1989 — The Alternative Site Committee located several available sites, and in February 1989 reported their findings to the Board and recommended the purchase of 90 or 172 acres on Kings Fork Road in Suffolk. An option was taken on the land with the understanding that if proper zoning could be granted the site would be purchased. A master plan for the total 172-acre site was prepared by Freeman-White Associates of Charlotte, and by the end of the year zoning was approved by the Suffolk City Council. It was approved with the understanding that the project would be built only after water and sewer were brought to the site and that construction would begin by August 1995. Yearly progress reports were to be made to the City Council. The zoning approval by the city required that a buffer zone of some fifty-four lots be provided to give the surrounding developments a comfort level for the project and thus gain their support. Two very important points were realized, however: space was provided for an affordable housing apartment building and about 5 acres was zoned commercial to provide for some small community businesses.

The 172-acre site was purchased at a cost of \$10,000 per acre with money loaned by the corporation and with the understanding it would be paid back as financing for the project was arranged so that other opportunities for ministry could be undertaken. The Franklin site was to be sold and the income from the sale was to go towards the purchase of this new site.



1991 site plan, Lake Prince Center, Suffolk, Va.

A problem arose in that some individuals and churches felt they had given money for the establishment of a retirement community in Franklin and since that was no longer the plan their contributions should be returned. All of these challenges were patiently and painfully worked through with every effort being made to keep everyone in concert for the completion of the dream. There were times when persons openly expressed their doubts that it would ever happen, but with persistence and dedication one obstacle after another was overcome.

By the end of 1989 effort had been made to build a climate in Suffolk for support of this project. Meetings were held with the Obici Hospital Board and with Elon's Turner Home to talk about the plan for this continuing care retirement community and to think about how these groups might work together. It seemed as if some arrangement might be made to help strengthen the work of Turner Home, a group home for the physically and mentally disabled operated by Elon Children's Home, but it was independently decided that this home was no longer financially viable and it was closed. A good working relationship was developed with Obici Hospital, even to the point that there was effort for a joint project related to opening a nursing home owned by the hospital and operated by United Church Retirement Homes.

1990 — The joint venture with Obici Hospital took on new life when Obici agreed to work with United Church Retirement Homes to have sixty nursing home beds, for which they had a Certificate of Need in Smithfield, moved to Suffolk. The nursing home was to have been built on the Kings Fork Road site, owned by the hospital, but managed by the retirement center. A cosponsored application was filed with the state for this venture and was supported at all levels up to the state Department of Health, where it was opposed by other nursing homes in the area and ultimately denied certification. This was another disappointment, since Virginia had a moratorium on the issuing of certified nursing home beds and this was the only possibility in the foreseeable future for beds that would be open to the public and certified for Medicare/Medicaid.

1991 — Negotiations continued with the City of Suffolk for the extension of water and sewer lines to the Kings Fork Road site. There was evidence a sewer line would be built along this road to take sewer from the nearby City of Windsor, but it became clear the city was going to give little support for the construction of a water line. If it were to be built, the proposed project would have to carry the cost of construction of an eight-inch water line for about one and one-half miles. It was determined that if the forced sewer line were available, with the major cost to the project being that of providing a pump station, it would be financially feasible to construct the water line.

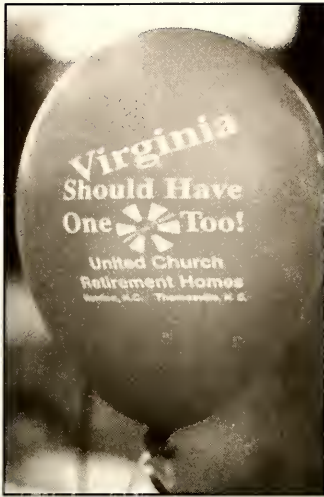


Rollin Russell, conference minister, presenting check from sale of Moonelon to Julia Anne Williams, Financial Secretary for Virginia Operations Council.

Kings Fork Road was resurfaced and for a cost of \$16,000 the required turn lane for the retirement community was constructed.

The Southern Conference contributed \$63,250 to UCRH to help develop a portion of the Suffolk site for outdoor ministries. This gift was made possible through the sale of the Camp Moonelon property.

The SHARE Campaign was authorized by the Southern Conference to be conducted for the purpose of providing funds for the ministry of UCRH, with special emphasis on raising money for the Virginia project and the Benevolent Trust Fund. The goal was to raise \$1.5 million over a three-year period. The project was presented on the floor of the Southern Conference meeting held in Hampton, Va., around the theme, "Yes, Virginia Should Have One, Too!" The following song formed the backdrop for the presentation.



Balloon for SHARE Campaign, Lake Prince Center, Suffolk, Va.

Yes, Virginia Should Have One Too!
(Tune: "You're A Grand Old Flag")

*Here's a vision that puts a smile on your face,
A secure and a loving place,
A new community, the place to be,
A life full of wholeness and grace.
Come celebrate, come dedicate
Yourselves to do something new!
Let's all join hands; there's work to do
So Virginia may have one, too!*

*Adding Life to Years, secure and with joy,
Active folks, both the young and the old,
Making great new friends, setting bold new trends,
A ministry too seldom told.
We can all invest in providing the best,
To the cause we can all be true.
It's our own future that we plan.
Yes, Virginia should have one, too!*

*We should all prepare to give and to care.
Individuals and churches can share.
With a common role we will reach our goal,
A place to which none can compare.
When the center's there, near the banks of Lake Prince
We will join to enjoy the view.
So come along and join our song,
Then Virginia will have one, too!*

While the SHARE Campaign did not raise the goal of \$1.5 million that had been established, it did raise the consciousness level of the churches across the Conference with regard to the seriousness of those who were determined to build a retirement facility in Eastern Virginia.

The total amount raised for the Virginia project through this effort was about \$485,000.

1992-93 — Negotiations with the City of Suffolk for the establishment of a continuing care retirement community became more difficult. The water line that was to have been required took on a new dimension with the city asking for a sixteen-inch line instead of an eight-inch line, increasing the cost considerably. Effort was made to enlist the cooperation of nearby developments to secure water to the area, and an agreement was reached with the Indian Point Developers to share the cost of the line. The problem now arose in that the city had changed city managers and in order to provide the needed water supply for the growing areas of Suffolk, the water line being proposed was to be increased to twenty-four inches! Matters had gotten so complex at this point that it became necessary to hire some local experienced persons to help with negotiations and to see if things could now be moved along more rapidly. Attorney Samuel Glascock, an attorney who was quite familiar with the health care/retirement industry, since he served as chairman of the Obici Hospital Board, was retained to be the chief negotiator with the city. Sylvia Old and Associates, a group with expertise in working with older adult issues in the state of Virginia, was engaged to help the attorney with details and to serve in helping to prepare the needed documents for approval of the project by the state Department of Health.

1993 — An extensive study was prepared and printed to show the City of Suffolk the many advantages of a CCRC, as an aid to the attorney and with the hope that it would help expedite the decision-making.

1994 — Hampton Road Sanitation District purchased an easement/right-of-way across the front of the property for a sewer line. Since it looked as if things were beginning to move again, a state legislator was approached to introduce a bill to the Virginia General Assembly to permit the construction of a CCRC by United Church Retirement Homes, in Suffolk, Va., with sixty nursing home beds. The issue was referred to the Department of Health with the understanding that a formal application would be approved.

1995-96 — An application was prepared and submitted to the Department of Health of the Commonwealth of Virginia for the establishment of a continuing care retirement community in Suffolk with all of the components required for approval of nursing home beds to service those persons who choose to move to the center.

The project was officially named Lake Prince Center, United Church Retirement Homes.

1997 — An agreement was signed with nearby property owners to help with the cost of the construction of the water line, and the city agreed to a reimbursement schedule that should make the construction of the line feasible. A contract was also signed with an engineering company for the design of the water line with the understanding that as the line was built it would be supervised by the city.

1998 — A marketing office was opened in Suffolk to begin marketing the 60 to 70 percent of the independent living units required as pre-sales before tax-exempt bonds could be sold for the purpose of financing the project.



Marketing office, Lake Prince Center, Suffolk, Va.

1999 —

On Nov. 21, 1999 ground was broken for Lake Prince Center and a construction contract was negotiated with Neilson Construction Co. of Harrisonburg, Va., to build the project.

2000 —

Construction got underway in early July, and by the end of the year all documents were



Ground breaking, Lake Prince Center, Suffolk, Va.

completed for a \$36 million bond issue to fund the project.

Persons Serving on the First Virginia Operational Advisory Committee:

(The name of this committee was changed to Tidewater Operational Advisory Committee in February of 1982, and later became known as Virginia Operations Council).



Construction, Lake Prince Center, Suffolk, Va.

Dr. Leroy Howell, Chairman

Rev. Daniel Bowers

Mr. Willard Brown, Jr.

Mr. Thomas R. Jones

Mrs. Eunice Moore

Mr. Jack Nurney, Jr.

Mrs. James A. Rawles

Mr. Walter Seely, Sr.

Mr. Samuel Shuler

Mrs. Julia Anne Williams

Rev. Carl E. Wallace

Rev. Robert Marr

Rev. William Everhart

Dr. William C. March

Mr. Enoch C. Copeland

Dr. Dardin W. Jones

Rev. L. Bill Simmons, Ex-officio

Suffolk, Va.

Chester, Va.

Suffolk, Va.

Suffolk, Va.

Portsmouth, Va.

Suffolk, Va.

Richmond, Va.

Waverly, Va.

Portsmouth, Va.

Suffolk, Va.

Chesapeake, Va.

Suffolk, Va.

Suffolk, Va.

Suffolk, Va.

Franklin, Va.

Chesapeake, Va.

(Simmons was the associate conference minister for the Eastern Virginia Association of the Southern Conference.)

Some of the persons originally appointed were unable to serve. Often persons were co-opted to share important information or help expand the interest in the proposed project. Others added during the first year the committee was meeting as an integral part of UCRH were:

Mr. Frank Potter

Rev. Forest Wells

Mr. Emmett Rawles

Mr. Homer Hines

Hampton, Va.

Virginia Beach, Va.

Suffolk, Va.

Newport News, Va.

Programs Of Outreach

Into The Wider Community

Outreach into the wider community began early in the history of UCRH. At first it was providing resident volunteers to reach out to schools, libraries, hospitals and a variety of other community services. Staff served on boards of such community agencies as United Way and Mental Health, and provided leadership for support groups ministering to persons with special needs. They helped start such programs as the Adult Life Programs of the Catawba Valley, an adult day care program which has expanded until it operates several sites in the county and whose Board of Directors has successfully initiated other programs designed to be responsive to the needs of older adults. Before the adult day care program was initiated at UCRH there was a one-day-a-week program at Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C., known as "Friends of Abernethy," where older adults from the area were invited to the center one day a week to enjoy fellowship with Abernethy residents, participate in crafts such as quilting and ceramics, and enjoy a meal in the dining room. This program was primarily under the direction of Mrs. Lois Mitchum, who served as activity director and later as Director of Social Work.

In the summer of 1983 UCRH sponsored a three-day seminar in cooperation with Blowing Rock Assembly Grounds around the theme "Aging Is Living." The byline for this seminar was "United Church Retirement Home is dedicated to providing educational experiences relating to the total ministry of aged persons in the local church and wider community." The objectives of the seminar were as follows:

- To help local churches and older persons identify unmet needs, explore options and resources for meeting these needs, and set the scene for seeing aging as a rewarding and fulfilling experience*
- To offer practical suggestions for creative ministry among the elderly and the wider community*
- To help local churches develop models for ministry which can enable older persons to experience full and meaningful involvement in congregational life*
- To help the local church and the aging person to identify satisfying alternative styles for living for the growing population of older adults*

Objectives such as these characterized the many efforts made by UCRH to reach out in service to the wider community beyond providing retirement living facilities. This marked the first such seminar held at Blowing Rock Assembly Grounds designed to consider the concerns of older adult ministry. Since that time seminars or workshops have been held nearly every summer designed specifically for older adults or dealing with older adult issues, and on a number of occasions staff of UCRH have helped provide the leadership.

In 1987, through the encouragement of UCRH, the Southern Conference appointed a Task Force on Aging to seek ways of helping local congregations minister more effectively to older members and to help older members identify the importance of their ministry. The program was also to identify key older adults across the conference who could begin to take a more active role in spreading the gospel. UCRH staff worked with this task force in preparing materials and conducting workshops across the Southern Conference. Packets of material were assembled which included a copy of Henri Nouwen's book "Aging - the Fulfillment of Life," "Older Adult Ministry - A Resource for Program Development" (1987), prepared by a number of denominations to give guidance to local congregations as they planned programs for older adults, and a "Guide for Local Church Ministries," compiled and printed by UCRH. Clergy and laypersons from across the conference were invited to these workshops for the purpose of looking for ways to enhance the ministry of the local church as it faces the challenges of what at that time was called "the graying of America."

A more significant attempt at outreach ministry was made when in 1982 Piedmont Housing, Inc. was formed as an organized effort to try to provide quality subsidized housing for persons who could not afford to move to a structured retirement facility. It was set up as a nonprofit corporation and was used to make at least two unsuccessful applications to HUD for financing such a housing venture. This corporation was reinstated in 1995 and was used to submit a successful HUD application for Burlington, N.C.

The commitment to affordable housing as an outreach ministry into the wider community was formalized in 1995 when the corporate staff position of Director of Operations and Outreach Ministry was added. The person employed to fill this position was Rev. Wilmer Brown, who had been serving on the board and had housing experience with Habitat for Humanity. The push for such a position came when a member of First Reformed United Church of Christ in Burlington, N.C., Mr. William Price, challenged UCRH to cosponsor

an application to HUD to fund a forty-unit apartment building. The local congregation would provide the site adjacent to the church building and UCRH would provide the corporation, half the application fee, and its historical track record and expertise in providing housing for the elderly.



The Willows, Burlington, N.C.

mission and a good feeling of what it means to reach out in a significant way to spread the good news of Jesus Christ. It provided UCRH with a success story in helping to provide affordable housing in the wider community and a higher level of identity within the church family. This experience pushed UCRH into the "big league" with respect to helping provide affordable living opportunities to more older adults. The learning was that more effort had to be expended to rightly approach this kind of endeavor and provide qualified staff to manage and administer such ventures.



Newton Elementary School, Newton, N.C.

The challenge was accepted, and what a surprise and joy it was when the announcement was made that the application was approved and funded! The apartment building was successfully constructed and a special dedication service was held in April 1999. This venture provides very adequate and affordable housing for older adults at a wonderful location in the city of Burlington. The project gives the members of First Reformed Church a deep sense of

About the time UCRH was working with the church in Burlington, representatives from the Newton-Conover, N.C., School Board visited the corporate office to inquire if anything related to ministry among older adults might be planned for the old Newton Elementary School building. This was a beautiful old building with a lot of wonderful memories, but it had not been used for school purposes for a number of years. The school board had considered tearing the building down, but that was going to be a costly operation, and it felt it was a

building that could surely be used for some worthwhile community project. After a rather extensive review of the situation it was determined that this would be a great location for a senior center and affordable apartments for seniors. The support of the Western Piedmont Council of Governments was solicited and it provided funds and its expertise to conduct a feasibility study for such a facility. Engineering and architectural studies were carried out to make sure the building was suitable for such a project. During this involved process the City of Newton was supportive and felt that this cooperative project was good for the city. It would provide an opportunity for a number of community groups to work together to bring needed services to an important segment of the population. Everything, including financing for the project, seemed to be in place, but at the City Council/Zoning meeting where final approval was to be given, (to the surprise of many, particularly UCRH staff) there was considerable neighborhood pressure against the conversion of the building. The objections listed were increased traffic and the lowering of property values. This was an unexpected objection because the neighborhood had been surveyed during the feasibility phase of the planning. The hearing ended with certain limitations being set by City Council if the project were to move forward. With the new developments and imposed limitations, the project was once again reviewed with representatives from the school system and the Council of Governments and it was decided that it would not be wise to proceed with the project since the immediate neighborhood was actively opposed to the proposal. This was particularly disappointing to UCRH, since for some time there had been a vision of being able to have an inner-city ministry in communities close enough to one of the CCRCs so that services from that center, such as maintenance, nursing and activities, could offer backup support. The project was ultimately dropped in order to help maintain a cohesive community spirit.

An attempt had been made to establish an apartment complex and senior activity facility in Hickory, N.C., in the early 1980s with Corinth UCC. Corinth was in control of the old Claremont High School building on Third Avenue, NE, which became its property once it was no longer used for school purposes. Working through a member of the congregation, Mr. Fred Abernethy, who was an architect in Hickory and extremely interested in providing affordable housing for older adults, a proposal was made to convert the school into housing and programmatic space for the elderly. At the time the school was available there were two proposals competing for its use. The other proposal was to convert it into a community arts and science center, which it is today. The arts and science proposal had the needed financial support and has since become a facility much appreciated by the people of the whole Catawba Valley. At the time this Hickory project was proposed by UCRH, there was neither the financing nor the staff time available to make it a priority endeavor. It did give a sense of reality to the vision of community based ministries, however. By the time the Newton proposal came along, UCRH was more of a seasoned corporation with staff time and planning skills ready to more aggressively pursue such outreach concerns. The Newton experience with the school and the successful cooperative effort with First Reformed UCC of Burlington set the stage for priority effort to give more form and substance to the second part of the mission statement to help enhance the quality of life of older adults "by outreach into the wider community."

Carrboro — Chapel Hill, N.C.

The Board for Homeland Ministries of the United Church of Christ owned a 9.7-acre piece of property in Carrboro, N.C., which was purchased as a site for a new church known as New Covenant UCC. It had been the dream of this new congregation to use part of the property for a new church building and to devote a portion of it to an affordable housing project. In fact, prior to 1994 an attempt had been made by representatives from the church body to get an application approved for a project through the Department of Housing and Urban Development. In 1994 New Covenant UCC of Carrboro made the decision that it could no longer make the payments on the property and returned to the Board for Homeland Ministries all rights to the property, which BHM promptly determined should be put back on the market.

This was a strategically located site, with great opportunity for improving the identity of the United Church of Christ in the Carrboro/Chapel Hill area, if properly used. Informal dream sessions were held with representatives from New Covenant UCC, the pastors of United Church of Chapel Hill, and the executive director of UCRH, with thoughts of a cooperative effort to maintain the site and design a variety of uses for it that would provide high visibility for the mission and ministry of the United Church. Through personal contacts with BHM by UCRH it was agreed that before the property was put on the market, time would be given for a feasibility study to be done to determine how it might be used for an expanded United Church ministry in the area. Mr. Henry Lister, a member of United Church of Chapel Hill and a doctoral student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, was engaged to do a study. He surveyed the need for housing for older adults in the area, as well as for nursing and assisted living facilities. He further checked into the implementation and possibilities of proper zoning for the site as well as available utilities. The study documented definite need for such a project and a very supportive Carrboro City Council. The biggest concern was how such a venture would be financed.

With a very positive feasibility study and an enthusiastic group of grassroots folks, it was possible to convince BHM to give priority consideration to a cooperative UCC project on the site. They agreed that the property would be available for such a project at its original value of \$350,000, but would need to be purchased with no involvement in the development on the part of BHM. In order for BHM to carry on its mission and ministry, it was essential for it to sell the property and recoup its money as soon as possible. BHM did agree that it would accept an option on the property for six months, with an up-front payment of \$3,000. UCRH agreed to help up-front with the option until decisions could be made regarding the use of the site and proper financing could be put in place. The excitement for such a cooperative venture was catching, and a corporation was formed with a board made up of equal representation from New Covenant UCC, United Church of Chapel Hill and UCRH. The dream was to program the site for a subsidized housing unit, an assisted living building with auxiliary community ministries, and a third building which hopefully would be a church building and/or a child day care center. It was thought that some phase of the project might be in cooperation with the university.

Since an application had previously been made to HUD for low-income housing, it seemed as if that were the logical thing to further investigate. Upon a visit to the HUD office in Greensboro, it was learned that financing might be available through it for an assisted living unit, as well as an apartment building, if it were built to HUD specifications and met some medical criteria. This was encouraging as planning continued. Perry Craven Associates in Winston-Salem was engaged in 1995 to prepare an application to HUD to finance an apartment complex for older adults. Mr. Arthur Cogswell of Chapel Hill was employed as the architect, and Weaver Construction of Greensboro was chosen as the contractor. After going through all of the channels, the project did not receive approval that year, but all indications were that if a few changes were made the project would be approved the following year. The problem now was to convince BHM to extend the option for another year in order to resubmit the application. After rather lengthy negotiations, an additional fee of \$1,000 was paid by UCRH to extend the option, and with appropriate changes the HUD application was resubmitted for a forty-two unit apartment building for older adults that would be subsidized through the Section 8 HUD program. This application was approved and all of the efforts began to seem worthwhile. The question now arose as to where funding was going to be found to pick up the option on the entire 9.7-acre site. Confident that the long-range plans for the site would eventually be realized, the Board of Directors of UCRH made the decision to purchase the property and to make the necessary acreage available to each of the planned segments at a price that would enable at least the original cost of the property to be paid back as the project was developed.

The forty-two unit apartment building was a fully cooperative effort with the two church groups and UCRH, with most of the preliminary planning being done by the organized UCC Living Centers, Inc. It was different for the assisted living facility that was being planned almost at the same time. While it was being guided by the cooperative board, the planning was being carried out through the staff of UCRH, who had the experience and expertise in planning and constructing such facilities. It was to be a freestanding and hopefully self-supporting unit, but since it was being planned for the same campus as the apartment complex and a third unit of some type, it would have plans and programs that would support and complement the other units. The assisted living facility was planned as a seventy-unit facility with eleven rooms for Alzheimer's residents, and an adult day care and community outreach program for older adults was to be operated under the umbrella of UCRH with day-to-day operations and planning given oversight by the appointed/elected board of a separate corporation set up to HUD requirements and guidelines. This segment of the project was also funded by a HUD loan which provided 95 percent of the construction costs. HUD also approved the plans for the structure. The three groups, New Covenant, United Church of Chapel Hill and UCRH formed a separate corporation to oversee the assisted living facility.



Ground breaking, Covenant Place, Chapel Hill, N.C.

This outreach effort successfully met many challenges along the way as things took shape. It was no easy task to meet the different requirements for the project that started out in the town of Chapel Hill, but through some internal political maneuvering ended up in the town of Carrboro. The project continues to struggle to become financially viable, but it does stand as a witness to what is possible through cooperative effort. It provides much-needed services to the area through a nonprofit entity that continually seeks ways to effectively minister to peoples' needs. Without outside financial support through such programs as Medicare/Medicaid or substantial benevolent dollars to help it respond to needs, it will struggle financially. It

is, however, a witness to what persons can accomplish when they are committed to a vision and are persistent in completing the tasks necessary to meet the many challenges. It has also served as the springboard that has enabled UCRH to successfully compete for other projects and provide outreach ministries in other communities. Indeed, the mission ministries provided on the 9.7-acre site have strengthened the identity of the United Church of Christ in the Chapel Hill area, and have partially fulfilled the commitment of UCRH to help provide visible ministries



Dedication of Covenant Place, Chapel Hill, N.C.



Shepherd House, Chapel Hill, N.C.

among older adults in the Eastern North Carolina Association of the Southern Conference. Covenant Place, dedicated in June 1998, and Shepherd House, dedicated in October 1998, and strategically located in Chapel Hill, are serving a segment of the population that otherwise might not be reached, and doing it in the spirit of Christian love and outreach. They serve as an example of how such services should be provided, and do so in ways that encourage others who are providing such services to be better than they might otherwise be. Since this project was such a learning experience and has helped set the guidelines and standards for future

community outreach ministries, it seems fitting to list the original group of persons who worked so hard to bring it into being.

They are as follows:

*Ms. Nancy Atwater
Ms. Sue Baker
Rev. Richard Edens
Ms. Pamela Edwards
Dr. Donald Flick
Mr. Hilton Goulson
Mr. Malcolm Hunter
Mr. Henry Lister
Ms. Karen Long
Ms. Malissa Minor
Ms. Patricia Norman
Mr. Robert Tiemann
Ms. Gina Upchurch
Mr. William Zook*



Board of Directors meeting, Chapel Hill Living Centers, Chapel Hill, N.C.

The managers of Covenant Place have been:

*Linda Tolliver
Renee Powell
Mindy Kiser*

The administrators of Shepherd House have been:

*Mr. Jonathan Briggs 1998
Mr. Richard E. Faught 1999
Mr. W. Larry Sink 2000*

NOAH Project (New Bern Older Adult Housing)

If UCRH was going to carry on ministry among all of the member of Southern Conference it was important to provide some type of outreach to the far Eastern part of North Carolina. Early in 1998 the Vice President of Housing Services, Rev. Wilmer Brown, located a suitable site in New Bern, N.C., and made an application to construct a thirty-seven unit HUD 202-apartment complex.

Approval for the application was received on Nov. 30, 1998, along with a Project Rental Assistance Contract for a period of five years. Local people were selected to serve on the Board of Directors for the project and the churches in the area began to respond favorably to the idea of helping to provide quality affordable housing for the elderly in that area. Due to the lack of understanding



Ground breaking, NOAH, New Bern, N.C.

regarding HUD housing, many of the people had reservations about having a subsidized facility in New Bern, but as construction got underway the attitude gradually changed.

The thirty-seven unit apartment building was designed by architect Arthur Cogswell of Chapel Hill, N.C., and was constructed by Weaver Construction Co. of Greensboro, N.C. The building was modeled after Covenant Place in Chapel Hill with a few revisions. Ground was broken for the project in August 1999 and the first residents moved into the facility on March 17 of the following year. A formal open house and dedication service was held on June 29-30, 1999. The cost of the project was \$2,865,200.



Dedication of NOAH, New Bern, N.C.

After this beautiful and functional building was viewed by the people of the area and the city fathers, the comment was made by one elected official of the area, "We need to build another apartment building like this in another section of New Bern." Ms. Jeannette Breckenridge was employed as the first manager of the facility.

Emmanuel's Place

It was discovered that Statesville, N.C., was a location designated by HUD as a growing area in need of quality affordable housing. This sparked the interest of the vice president of housing services of UCRH, since Statesville is relatively near the corporate office and on the main route of staff as they travel to other cost centers. An application was made to HUD for funding for a thirty-nine-unit apartment complex early in 2000 and by mid-December all of the necessary approvals had been received to get the project underway.

The thirty-nine-unit apartment complex was designed by architect Arthur Cogswell of Chapel Hill and is being constructed by Blue Ridge Enterprises of Mt. Airy, N.C. It was the desire of UCRH that the Board of Directors for this project "embrace the ecumenical spirit of unity" and be representative of the community where the project is located. Ms. Vermal Moore, an elementary school principal, was named as the first chairperson of the board. The board is composed of persons from the community from a variety of different denominational backgrounds. The project was completed and ready for occupancy by the end of 2001.



Emmanuel's Place, Statesville, N.C.

The name Emmanuel was chosen for this project because as the former Vice President of Housing Services, Rev. Mr. Wilmer Brown, said, "by the time Housing Services had received its third fund reservation to build quality affordable housing for elderly, we knew ... certainly, that God is with us!" Emmanuel means "God with us."

Centerclair

The Piedmont Operations Council and the UCRH Board of Directors have a long history of working to get Medicare/Medicaid certified nursing beds to help with carrying on ministry in the Davidson



Centerclair, Lexington, N.C.

County area. It was no surprise, therefore, that when a member of the board presented the possibility of purchasing a nursing home that was available in the Lexington-Thomasville area there was a great deal of interest.

Piedmont Center, located just a few miles from the available home, has only ten certified beds and has an increasing number of inquiries for quality nursing care to which it cannot favorably respond. The purchase of this facility would open up a wide variety of possibilities for UCRH in an area where the United Church of Christ has a larger number of congregations than in any other part of the state. What a challenge it was to consider purchasing a facility that had sixty-six nursing beds and a licensed child day care center to provide services for forty-nine children.

Concern was expressed that UCRH was engaged in too many projects at the time to take on a facility that would require a great deal of attention to properly integrate it into the system. It was, however, too



Playground of Child Care Center, Centerclair, Lexington, N.C.

challenging an opportunity to pass up and after a rather extensive "due diligence study" the facility was purchased on Oct. 1, 2000, from Mr. and Mrs. Lou Williams of Lexington, N.C. As part of the purchase plan, Centerclair was to go through a rather extensive renovation both in the nursing unit and in the child care center. This renovation took place during 2001.

The new Administrator for the facility was Mr. Richard Cranford, who had helped with marketing at Piedmont Center in 1995 and had completed his administrator-in-training program under the guidance of the administrator, Mr. C. Shuford Abernethy III. Since leaving Piedmont Center, he had gained a great deal of experience both in the field of nursing home administration and human relations through positions with Beverly Enterprises, a large proprietary health care provider.

The Rev. C. Philip Laucks, President/CEO of UCRH, stated concerning this acquisition, "The addition of the Centerclair facility to our family of homes increases our ability to live out our mission, especially to older persons in the Lexington-Thomasville area. We are pleased that this purchase has come to fruition and that we will be able to build upon the fine reputation Centerclair has maintained for so many years." Mr. and Mrs. Williams purchased the facility in 1973, so it has a long history of service.

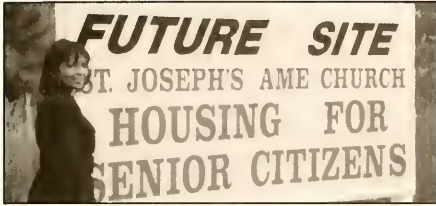


Child Care Center of Centerclair, Lexington, N.C.



*Richard Cranford,
Administrator, Centerclair*

Durham Apartments



Renee Powell, VP of Outreach at Durham apartment site.

The ecumenical spirit of UCRH continues with a project in Durham, N.C. This project is being co-sponsored with St. Joseph's A.M.E. Church who, along with UDI Development Group, will provide persons to serve on the Board of Directors.

UCRH will lend its expertise to help guide the group and will manage the facility once construction is complete. This is a thirty-two unit apartment building being constructed with HUD funding and will receive 202 rent subsidy. The facility should be ready for occupancy early in 2002.

Other Efforts Designed for Community Outreach



Obici Hospital with Donald P. Flick (left) of UCRH and Leroy Edward (right), Administrative Assistant of the hospital, Suffolk, Va.

United Church Retirement Homes has always tried to stay on the cutting edge and help establish new models for ministry or open new areas of service. In the 1990s many efforts were made to form alliances between hospitals and retirement/nursing facilities, but as early as 1985 UCRH had meetings with Southampton Memorial Hospital in Franklin, Va., to consider a cooperative effort as dreams for a retirement community in that area were being realized.

As progress continued to be made in the Virginia area and UCRH purchased a site in Suffolk for a full-service retirement community, effort turned to seeking a possible cooperative venture with Suffolk's Obici Hospital. The Administrator, Mr. Richard Germack, and the hospital board were very interested in what UCRH was proposing.

Meetings were held with the hospital board of directors and great progress was made, even to the extent that in 1990 a proposal was made to the Virginia Department of Health to allow Obici Hospital to build a nursing facility on the land owned by UCRH which would be managed by UCRH. Such a venture would have helped provide certified nursing beds for the retirement community as well as for the wider community. What a wonderful venture this would have been, but the state did not choose to approve the proposal model.

Another attempt was made in 1996-97 to work with a hospital and design a model program for a community, providing a delivery system for services not available in many communities. UCRH and Thomasville Community General Hospital presented a joint Certificate of Need application to the North Carolina Department of Facility Services for a nursing home and rehabilitation center. This facility would have been located on the hospital site in Thomasville and would have provided both nursing home beds and a variety of outpatient services for older adults. It would have had the full support of the hospital and Piedmont Center of UCRH, making it possible to design and test new models responsive to the growing needs and concerns of the area. It could have been a model that would have helped creatively reshape ministry among older adults, but again the state chose not to issue the Certificate of Need and the project did not proceed.

UCRH does not give up easily when it comes to pursuing ways of providing better quality care to older adults. In 2000 a joint effort was undertaken with Catawba Memorial Hospital of Catawba County, and the Lutheran Home in Hickory, to construct and jointly operate a one hundred bed nursing facility in the Hickory-Conover area. The plan was to bring together the experience and support of the three nonprofit entities in the county to help seek new ways of reaching out to provide services for older adults. It would have been a venture that could have helped changed the attitude of the community about how services are delivered as well as providing innovative models of care, but again the state chose not to approve such a venture.

It is important for those ministering to the needs of older adults to design new methods and try new approaches. UCRH has always seen this as part of its mission. Often the authorizing entity or the community are not ready to support new or innovative ideas, but just raising the possibilities sows seeds for creative change. In the early 1990s the executive director of UCRH made a study of nursing home care in Europe and proposed the construction of a nursing unit, with an Alzheimer's component, that provided a family setting for the residents and was constructed in such a way as to provide a supportive community. A model for such a facility was introduced to the state Division of Facility Services for approval, but it did not meet all the rules and regulations of the time. Nearly ten years later people in policy-making positions began talking about such things as "cluster groups" and "Eden Alternatives" which included the type of ideas that were integrated into this earlier proposal. UCRH has a mandate through its mission statement to reach out into the community and help establish new models of ministry. Not all attempts will be successful, but through those that will be the ministry to older adults will be enhanced.

Gift and Thrift Resale Shop, Newton, N.C.

For many years employees, residents and volunteers at Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C., conducted an annual yard sale. This was a major fundraiser for what was then called the Sustaining Fund (later to become the Benevolent Trust Fund) which provided money to help residents whose needs were greater than their ability to pay. Many of the items offered for sale were donated by residents or residents' families at the time a resident moved to a skilled nursing room or at the time of their death. As the center grew and became a fully operating continuing care retirement community, residents moving into independent living units often had items to dispose of as they scaled down or moved into assisted living or nursing. The idea of continuing to have yard sales to dispose of such items and to store them from year to year was daunting and more than staff could handle in an orderly and successful manner.

Taking a clue from other nonprofit groups who were successfully operating resale shops, the Board of Directors of UCRH accepted the idea of establishing such a shop and took action in the early 1990s to organize an outlet store. This store was to provide an opportunity for the meaningful disposition of donated items and to serve as an outreach ministry in the community. This project was to be organized at such time as the opportunity presented itself.



Opening of Gift and Thrift Resale Shop, Betty Bicknell (left) and Jo Anne Flick (right).

Mrs. Jo Anne Flick, who had served as Administrative Assistant at Abernethy Center and retired in 1994, offered her time and ability to undertake this project. She was a natural to help with such a venture since she knew most of the residents in the independent living units who could be challenged to serve as volunteers for the shop and who could encourage persons to contribute items that would make the shop successful. She also had the administrative skills to help with its organization. Mrs. Flick worked out a plan, met with persons from the Small Business Administration, and visited other resale shops. She organized an Advisory Committee and found a

suitable and affordable location at 105 N. College Ave. in Newton. The first three volunteers who signed up were Agnes and Ron McDaniels and Betty Bicknell. Agnes had recently retired as volunteer coordinator at Abernethy, and Betty had served a number of years as a long-term volunteer at the center and had recently retired there. Other volunteers were recruited and assisted in turning the rented space into a pleasant and inviting area. Even though it was to function completely as a volunteer operation, UCRH agreed to assist with the start-up monies for the first year. Those involved approached this project with a great deal of

enthusiasm and commitment. The Advisory Committee helped draw up guidelines and policies. The name Gift and Thrift was chosen because the committee decided not only to provide an outlet for used and/or discarded items, but also to provide gift items purchased for resale from SERRV. This gave the shop a more international flavor and a greater sense of being of service. The shop was opened for business in January 1995.

In the beginning the shop displayed items contributed mostly from the two operating continuing care retirement communities, but it soon became an excellent choice for local church members, volunteers and other community persons to bring their unneeded items. The store does not accept clothing, but does welcome contributions of a wide variety of items, especially furniture.

While what really makes this an outreach ministry is that it provides financial help to the Benevolent Trust Fund, it has another very important function. The Gift and Thrift Shop offers clean, usable household items to some persons in the community which they could not otherwise afford. The shop is operated by volunteers, and therefore helps by providing a ministry outlet where residents and community persons can serve and have fellowship together.

This is a project operated through the corporate office of UCRH, with a corporate staff person assigned the responsibility of giving oversight and guidance. The operation has grown so that there is now a paid, part-time manager in the person of Mrs. Agnes McDaniels. She has from the beginning been an avid proponent of the concept of the shop and continues to recruit and train all volunteers for this work. Since the beginning in 1995 more than \$80,000 has been contributed with all money above expenses going into the

Benevolent Trust Fund. The year 2001 was the best to date, with an income of more than \$10,000 in the first six months. Although the Gift and Thrift shop occupies rented space, the volunteers have been looking to the day when they can occupy a building owned by UCRH, thereby reducing the cost of operation and adding more capital to the Benevolent Trust Fund.

Members of the first Advisory Committee of Gift and Thrift were Jo Anne Flick, Betty Bicknell, Cliff McRee, Brenda Eckard, Ginny Bunn, Paul Woods and Devere Smith.



Agnes McDaniels



Advisory Committee presenting check from income of the Gift and Thrift Resale Shop to Gary Hurd, Director of Finance.

Section V

≡ Historical Briefs ≡

Notable Items of Interest



Lucille Goodson, hostess, at door to guest rooms.

Guest Rooms Hostess, Corporate Headquarters

The Morrison Building was constructed in 1982 for use by the UCRH corporation with offices on the first floor and three guest rooms and an apartment on the second floor.

Mrs. Lucille Goodson moved in shortly after the building was completed and lived in the apartment to serve as hostess for the guest rooms. She served in this position until 1995, when additional office space was needed for the finance department. The apartment and one of the adjoining guest rooms was remodeled for that purpose. Over the more than twelve years that Mrs. Goodson served as hostess she was a real ambassador for UCRH. Everyone who stayed in the guest rooms was welcomed and received royal treatment from this very fine hostess. Many who stayed in the guest rooms expressed their good feelings about UCRH because of the way Lucille represented this ministry. She was a certified nursing assistant and often filled in on the staff of Abernethy Center when her help was needed.

Kaleidoscope -- The newsletter of United Church Retirement Homes

Periodically a corporate newsletter was printed to communicate with the churches of Southern Conference and with friends of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. It was appropriate to print one for the tenth anniversary, for the Capital Funds Campaign of 1981-82, and for the fifteenth anniversary in 1986, but in 1988 a regularly published newsletter was launched called the *Kaleidoscope*. Names for the newsletter were solicited and *Kaleidoscope* was chosen because the publication was to enable the reader to "view the changing events of the work of United Church Retirement Homes and be inspired to become more deeply involved in this significant ministry." The newsletter was to be published two or three times a year to allow churches and contributing individuals to view the important work they were helping to carry out through UCRH. In one of the first publications the executive director wrote, "ours is a kaleidoscope ministry whose beauty, purpose, and character can clearly be seen and experienced"

The *Kaleidoscope* carries stories of residents, staff and volunteers, as well as significant accomplishments related to the work and ministry of UCRH. Periodically it lists the contributions of interested individuals and churches, since one of its original primary goals was to strengthen and motivate continued support of this outreach ministry.

Gifts Keep On Giving

In the formative stages of Abernethy Village it was difficult to find needed funds to construct independent living units. Many potential residents made funds available to pay for their desired units as they were constructed. Special gifts were sought to build well-designed units so interested persons could see the important features designed for older adults and experience the inviting environment of a retirement village. It was a real delight when a local industrialist and a member of Trinity United Church of Christ in Conover, N.C., came forward and made a contribution to construct the third cottage that was built at Abernethy Center.

Mr. Dewey Houston, owner and operator of a local hosiery mill, offered to pay for a model cottage that could be marketed to a prospective resident. The cottage was designed by Reinhardt and Smith Architects and constructed for a cost of approximately \$64,000 in 1983. This gift helped set the stage for the addition of other cottages, and it wasn't long before cottages were constructed on all of the lots then available on Geitner Avenue. A big thank-you goes to persons like Mr. Houston, who so generously share their blessings so that others can experience a greater joy in living.

Employee Recognition

Evelyn Shook, or “Shooky” as she is affectionately called, came to work for United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. as a nurse’s aide in December 1971. She will be recognized in the year 2001 for her thirty years of dedicated service to the care and companionship of older adults. She is representative of the quality of individuals who, over the years, have carried on the ministry of UCRH. They are indeed very special people.



Evelyn Shook and Barbara McRee at twenty-second anniversary celebration.

Shooky began her working career as a school teacher, with mathematics as her specialty. After teaching for two years she had the urge to change her vocation and work in the medical field. She took a course to become an operating room technician, but when she finished there were no positions available in the area and she decided to work as a nurse’s aide to get some experience. When she started at J.W. Abernethy Center there were about twenty-five residents. After thirty years she can still name some of those residents and tell you about their concerns, their habits and their families. She became friends with these folks and she says making friends with such fine folks is what has caused her to continue in this work. She says, “I’ve never regretted staying in this work for all these years. I’ve stayed because I get a lot of satisfaction out of helping people and making friends.” She did say that in

the early years the friendships she made with residents were somewhat more rewarding because “people were in better health when they came into the nursing unit than they are today and they were with us longer.”

This lady, who always has a smile and a good word for residents and employees alike, worked as a nurse’s aide for about five years and then assumed the duty of transporting persons to appointments and fellowship activities. For over twenty-five years she has been responsible for the major part of transportation at Abernethy Center. She said, “I can’t believe how this place has grown. When I started doing transportation we had about twenty-two doctors appointments a month, now we have that many in a week. I was eager to see the village get started. I had no comprehension what it would be like, but it is a plus for this place. I like it!”

Working at Abernethy Center is not just a job to Shooky. She speaks freely about how this place has taught her so much about life. One of the employees she talks about with a great deal of affection is Barbara McRee. “Barbara came to work here before the place really opened. She retired after twenty-five years of service but comes back to visit. She taught me so much about tolerance and not to be prejudiced. I don’t think I am prejudiced now at all. I accept people as they are and try to be helpful and friendly to them.” When asked if she thought her teaching degree was of any help to her as she has worked with older adults, she is quick to point out that because of her education to become a teacher she is able to talk with persons from all walks of life and make friends with them.

Shooky wants to work in her present position as transportation coordinator for another four and a half years, when she hopes to retire. The highlight of her career was being presented the Nursing Services Award by the North Carolina Association of Non-Profit Homes for the Aging in 1999.

The plaque reads:

“This Nursing Services Award is presented to Evelyn Shook for her tireless contribution to the residents of Abernethy Center and the field of aging.”

About receiving this award she said:



Evelyn Shook with Steve Patterson, Administrator, viewing her Nursing Services Award.

"I wish my father could have been there, he would have been so proud."

This historical brief is presented because it is so representative of the kind of persons who choose to give of themselves to this ministry. It is an example of how persons receive as well as give, and find satisfaction as employees in ministry through UCRH.

Abernethy Center has two persons designated as transportation coordinators, with a full-time office that plans and carries out the transportation needs of the residents, both health care and in independent living. The second person in this office is Marlene Snipes, who has been an employee of the center for over twenty-five years. What a wonderful team these two women make and how the residents love them.



Transportation Coordinator Marlene Sipes in the transportation office.



Presentation of Anniversary Painting by artist Philip Moose (right) to Donald Flick (left).

The Fulfillment of Life

The Fulfillment of Life is the title of a distinctive painting by Philip Moose. This renowned North Carolina artist painted the picture for the twentieth anniversary of United Church Retirement Homes to help promote this important ministry. When the first unit of Abernethy Center was opened in 1971, an original Philip Moose painting of Grandfather Mountain in western North Carolina graced the dining hall, hanging over a large fireplace. When the Morrison Corporate Office Building was dedicated, another Philip Moose painting complemented the office of the Executive Director. So it wasn't unusual that this local artist would help UCRH

celebrate its anniversary by producing this special painting. Mr. Moose not only presented the painting but also gave permission, for the first time in his career, to allow the painting to be reproduced into prints and note cards.

The painting captures the phrase used by UCRH in much of its literature during the 1980s and 1990s from the book "Aging, the Fulfillment of Life" by Henri Nouwen. "Aging," he says, "is the turning of the wheel, the gradual fulfillment of life." In the painting, the artist has vividly portrayed the life cycle where the aging tree gives rise to a seedling and the aging human guides the growth of the child. The painting challenges all who study its meaning to understand that in order to really fulfill our lives we must give ourselves to others.

The wheel, representing the cycle of life, has become an important symbol for UCRH. It suggests that aging is a process, and that at every point along the pilgrimage of life, persons should be challenged and enabled to live to their fullest. UCRH is dedicated to helping add life to the years of persons touched by this ministry.

The working water wheel symbolizes that every stage of life is part of the whole and that persons have something to share at every stage and at every turn. The turning of the wheel can be related to the process of aging and suggests that no one time in our lives is more important than another. The real source of a person's greatest joy is living life to the fullest, regardless of age. As the wheel turns, as aging takes place, the mystery of life is slowly revealed to us through the sharing of ourselves, so that others may find life. Aging is the turning of the wheel, the fulfillment of life, the life each of us has been given by God to live and to share.

Local Church Support

Second Church, UCC, Lexington, N.C., under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Odell Leonard was the very first congregation to put the retirement/nursing home in its budget in the late 1950s. Since then the number of congregations supporting this ministry either by putting it in their budgets or taking a special offering on an annual basis has been on the increase. In the year 2000 more than fifty churches supported the work and hundreds of individual church members made either direct gifts of support or memorial gifts or gifts of honor. Bulletin inserts printed and distributed annually for use on UCRH Sunday have helped motivate giving to the Sustaining Fund and to the Benevolent Trust Fund.

An important response to this ministry by the churches over the years has been to the several capital fund drives to help provide buildings to house residents and the various supporting programs. This response has meant real commitment and second-mile effort on the part of many congregations. An example of this

was the commitment made to the 1991 SHARE Campaign designed to provide up-front money for the Lake Prince Center. Churches were challenged to step forward and become "Pace Setter" congregations by pledging \$35 per member over a three-year period. There were three congregations that accepted this challenge early in the campaign. This provided incentive to others to make contributions. The first three congregations to become "pacesetter churches" were: Oakland Christian Church of Suffolk, Va., Chapel Grove United Church of Christ of Windsor, Va., and Congregational Christian Church of Albemarle, N.C.

Churches that invest regularly in the work and ministry of UCRH take seriously their ownership of this important outreach to older adults.



Congregational Christian Church of Albemarle, N.C.

Eden Alternative

The Eden Alternative program is designed to move a facility's environment away from the institutional towards a more home-like feeling. It de-emphasizes top-down authority and seeks to place the maximum possible decision-making authority in the hands of those closest to the residents. It introduces animals such as dogs, cats, and birds to help residents overcome loneliness. It provides a variety of spontaneous activities like bringing in children to help residents overcome boredom. It provides opportunities for residents to care for things like plants to help them feel a sense of usefulness. Abernethy Center, through

the leadership of the Heath Care Administrator, Ms. Michelle Roseman, became a registered Eden Alternative Institution in 2001. A state grant was received in the amount of \$25,000, five increments of \$5,000, to help implement this program.

Over a period of time, this program that was established and trademarked nationally will be introduced, with residents and their families and friends encouraged to participate. The various areas of the nursing unit will be designed as neighborhoods, with the residents and staff who live and work in these areas helping to choose the neighborhood designation. Statistics show that some nursing homes that are Edenized have a reduction in use of medications and report greater satisfaction on the part of both residents and staff as they go about their daily activities.



Pond and dog, representing part of Eden Alternatives, Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C.

Residents Find and Help Mold Community

Rev. Ted Dixon and his wife, Mary Lou, moved into a duplex on the campus of Abernethy Center in the summer of 1984 and immediately began to make friends. Rev. Dixon had served churches in Ohio and the New England states. After being a resident of the center for only several months Rev. Dixon said, "All of my ministry I have tried to build community, often without a lot of success, but I have found it here." That was meaningful testimony to the efforts of those responsible for planning and shaping this ministry. It has always been the dream of those dedicated to carrying out this ministry to help create meaningful community where persons can live their lives to the fullest possible potential.



Abernethy Center residents Ted and Mary Lou Dixon.



Pictured here are three of the Piedmont Center couples (left to right) Charles and Evelyn Chamberlain, Roger and Margery Veatch, Bill and Barbara Zook. Not pictured Lurber and Phyllis Abbot.

In the early 1980s four couples lived in the same town and attended the same church. These eight friends were in choir together, attended issue groups together and shared many similar experiences. Over a period of fifteen years they found themselves scattered to various locations across the United States. Then in 1996 all four couples were once again united as residents of Piedmont Center in Thomasville, N.C.! One member of the group said, "We are so glad to call Piedmont Center our home. We feel secure and know this is where we are meant to be. Everything is so well cared for, the staff is wonderful, and our neighbors are like family." These eight old friends who not only found community at Piedmont Center, but helped to build it, were Luther and Phyllis Abbot from Maine, Charles and Evelyn Chamberlain from New York, Bill and Barbara Zook from Ohio, and Roger and Margery Veatch from Chicago.

There are many stories like these that testify to the kind of renewal that takes place on the campuses of well designed and carefully programmed continuing care retirement communities.

A Training Component

With two licensed continuing care retirement communities and a wide variety of services and living opportunities, UCRH provides a wonderful arena for staff to train persons to work in the retirement/nursing home industry. In order for an individual to become a licensed nursing home administrator, most states require an apprentice program known as administrator-in-training, where the individual works under a preceptor for a designated number of weeks while studying the various rules and regulations of this area of service. At the completion of their training, the person must pass both a national and state test before they can be licensed. Since the mid-1980s UCRH has had persons trained as preceptors to help maintain a highly skilled staff of its own and to help train staff for other facilities, particularly persons to serve as licensed nursing home administrators. Lawrence N. Strunk served as preceptor for Donald P. Flick so he could receive his administrator's license in 1982, and the list of those trained under the guidance and encouragement of UCRH has continued to grow. The following is a list of those who have received their administrators training through the guidance and support of UCRH:

1982 Donald P. Flick
1984 Van D. Grimes
1984 Ronald Vaughn
1987 Betty A. Pfeiler
1989 Joseph France
1989 Kenneth Reeb
1990 Jonathan Briggs
1991 Shuford Abernethy
1994 Mary Wesley
1995 Richard S. Cranford
1995 Amber McIntosh
1996 Heidi Sink
1997 Michelle Roseman
2001 Dale Lyles
2001 Herbert Young

Preceptor; Lawrence N. Strunk
Preceptor; Donald P. Flick
Preceptor; Donald P. Flick
Preceptor; D. Russell Myers
Preceptor; D. Russell Myers
Preceptor; D. Russell Myers
Preceptor; D. Russell Myers
Preceptor; Donald P. Flick
Preceptor; Steve Patterson
Preceptor; Shuford Abernethy
Preceptor; Steve Patterson
Preceptor; Shuford Abernethy
Preceptor; Steve Patterson
Preceptor; Michelle Roseman
Preceptor; Steve Patterson

Catching the Vision



Richard, Lois and James Bost establishing Charitable Trust Fund with UCRH Director of Development D. Lee Jessup.

Richard and Lois Bost and their son, James, caught the vision of what UCRH can mean to a family and then they took action to enable others to benefit from this ministry. The Bosts moved to Abernethy Center from Hickory, N.C., in 1998 when James, who had been disabled since he was a child and was now in his sixties, needed nursing care. Richard and Lois sold their home and moved into an apartment in the Residential Mall where they could be close to James and the family could visit back and forth. The whole family endeared themselves to other residents and to the staff. It soon became evident to them that they had made the right decision to move to Abernethy Center and enjoy the ministry that they and other members of their local church, Corinth Reformed United Church of

Christ, had supported for many years. Because of their belief in the work of UCRH, Richard and Lois, during their first year of occupancy at Abernethy Center, established a charitable gift annuity and thereby made a major gift to help this ministry reach out and respond to the needs of others. The Vice President of Development, Dr. D. Lee Jessup, said of this gift, "The Bosts have crafted an outstanding Charitable Gift for the ongoing work of Abernethy Center. We are grateful for their vision, and inspired by their generosity."

Hollies Adorn the Campus



Fred Ebersole planting Holly Trees.

Fred and Mildred Ebersole moved to Abernethy Village in September of 1983 and will be remembered for more than their friendly personalities and their community spirit. They moved from New Jersey where Fred was an engineer with Exxon Corp. Before coming to the center they had made arrangements to bring with them to the campus a variety of holly plants. Over the years Fred had raised and experimented with hollies as a hobby and had in his collection literally hundreds of specimens. Places where these hollies could be located were designated by staff, who, along with a number of residents, helped plant the various types of hollies around the campus. A holly nursery was also established so plants could be made available for future expansion of the campus. Fred helped take care of this generous gift of hollies as long as he was a resident. As people visit the Abernethy Center they will be able to see how such generous gifts, given by concerned residents, have helped shape the beauty of Abernethy Center.



Abernethy Village showing hollies some years later.

Volunteer Recognition



Activity Director, Lois Mitchum, presenting certificate to long time volunteer Charles Van Goor, Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C.

for the volunteer program. Ms. Joanne Tarble was the first person to be assigned this responsibility at Piedmont Center. On a yearly basis, special recognition has been paid to volunteers, usually with a fellowship meal and the presentation of certificates and often a small memento in appreciation for their services.



Lois Toms (left) and Elaine Edwards (right).

As early as 1976 a relationship was established with the Board for Homeland Ministries of the United Church of Christ to place long-term volunteers with UCRH. Through this program, a person offered various amounts of time to work on specific projects or carry out specific duties not assigned to paid staff. UCRH has been blessed to have had such volunteers from various places in the United States and as far away as Germany and Sierra Leone.

A few examples of the type of service rendered is the participation of Ms. Lois Toms from Waynesboro, Penn., who helped plan for the interior decoration and furnishings of the Residential Mall at Abernethy Center (1989), assisted by a volunteer from New York, Ms. Elaine Edwards.

Elizabeth Coker from Sierra Leone, West Africa, wanted an international experience in assisting persons who were less able to do for themselves than she was, and she chose to serve at Abernethy Center (1989).

Rev. Petra Wassill from Germany served as Chaplain for six months at the Abernethy Center in 1995 through an exchange program with the Evangelical Church of the Rhineland in Germany at a time when there was not enough money in the budget for such a full-time person.

A number of other persons have served under the designation of long-term volunteers as an integral part of the ministry of UCRH. One of the most celebrated volunteers to serve in the ministry of UCRH through the Volunteer Service Program of BHM was Betty Bicknell from South Dakota. She served on two different occasions for a total of more than six years. Betty made so many friends and endeared herself so much to everyone that in 1994 she decided to become a resident of Abernethy Center. As a resident she continues to offer her services in a variety of areas.



Betty Bicknell, a volunteer who later became a resident.

The following is a listing of long term volunteers and when they served.

Volunteers — United Church Board of Homeland Ministries, Volunteer Services Program

Abernethy Center, Newton, N.C.

<i>Timothy J. Wepner</i>	<i>One year, 1976-77 — Wisconsin</i>
<i>Lois A. Pierson</i>	<i>One year, 1985 — Wisconsin</i>
<i>Betty C. Foster</i>	<i>Six months, 1986 — New York</i>
<i>William Larry Foster</i>	<i>Six months, 1986 — New York</i>
<i>Betty J. Bicknell</i>	<i>Two years, 1986-1988 — South Dakota</i>
<i>Elizabeth H. A. Coker</i>	<i>One year, 1989 — Sierra Leone</i>
<i>Betty J. Bicknell</i>	<i>Five years, 1989-94 — South Dakota, 1993 Volunteer of the Year — Council for Health and Human Service Ministries, UCC</i>
<i>Elaine Edwards</i>	<i>Three months, 1989 — New York</i>
<i>Claire L. Smith</i>	<i>Three months, 1991 — Connecticut</i>
<i>Patricia A. Humphrey</i>	<i>One year, 1995-96 — Illinois</i>
<i>Claire L. Smith</i>	<i>Three months, 1995 — Connecticut</i>
<i>Urs Dabl</i>	<i>Six months, 1996 — Germany</i>
<i>Armie K. Kerr</i>	<i>One year, 1996-97 — Texas</i>
<i>Alice M. Scott</i>	<i>One month, 1998 — California</i>
<i>Betty Mae Shear</i>	<i>Three months, 2001</i>
<i>Rev. Dosia Carlson</i>	<i>Three months, 2001 — Arizona</i>

Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C.

<i>Florence Hatch</i>	<i>Three months, 1988 — Iowa</i>
<i>Urs Dabl</i>	<i>Six months, 1996 — Germany</i>
<i>Frank Walkley</i>	<i>One month, 1999</i>

1999 Volunteer of the Year — Council for Health and Human Service Ministries, UCC

<i>Pat Walkley</i>	<i>One month, 1999</i>
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1999 Volunteer of the Year — Council for Health and Human Service Ministries, UCC

<i>Alice Mae Scott</i>	<i>One month, 1997 — California</i>
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Exchange Program with Evangelical Church of the Rhineland, Germany, Abernethy Center

<i>Rev. Petra Wassill</i>	<i>Six months, 1995 — Germany</i>
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Dosia Carlson (2001) and Abernethy Center Chaplain, Rev. Alfred Mullen.

Pictures Help Tell The Story

Pictures can often portray persons and convey historical events more realistically than words. As any ministry grows there are certain events, persons, and visible structures which get pushed aside and sometimes forgotten as an inevitable result of growth and creative change. Pictures help remind us of how the present is supported by the past and how the dream and vision of United Church Retirement Homes keeps growing and expanding.



Bridge at Abernethy Center.

The bridge at Abernethy Center, constructed in 1980-1981, provides easy walking access from The Village to the Health Care Unit and the Residential Mall. It is, however, more than a way for residents to walk safely from one place on campus to another. It is symbolic of the mission and vision of United Church Retirement Homes, which is to reach out in creative ways in response to the concerns and needs of older adults and to provide services which enable older adults to live life to their fullest capacity. The bridge stands as the result of a strong effort on the part of Rev. Lawrence Strunk who, when he was executive director, was determined to mold this continuing care retirement community in such a way that persons would have easy walking access to all parts of the campus and to each other.

Meet Persons Who Helped Shape and Make Meaningful the Motto of UCRH

—“Adding Life To Years.”

Julius W. Abernethy was not only a major benefactor of UCRH, but at every opportunity he would encourage contributions from others. He particularly encouraged Carolina Mills of Maiden, N.C., to make regular contributions. On one occasion in 1972 it presented the home with a late model car for the purpose of transporting residents to various activities and doctors appointments.



Golf cart is being presented to Rev. Strunk (left) by Cy Yeomans (right).

As the centers developed and expanded, it was difficult for some residents to get around. Many of them could no longer drive on the highways. A friend of Abernethy Center, who later became a resident along with his wife, Mildred, had the idea that if golf carts could be made available to residents it would help them continue to feel a sense of independence. Mr. Cy Yeomans helped purchase the first golf cart in 1983 and presented it to Rev. Lawrence Strunk, Administrator of Abernethy Center, to be used on campus.

Brian Eckard of Bethany UCC church near Claremont helped provide financing for an infirmary room when the Residential Mall was being built at Abernethy Center. He organized a walk-a-thon as one of his requirements for his Eagle Scout rank. Brian said, “Part of the requirements for this project were to involve and lead others. We had the advantage here of reaching people of different backgrounds and different ages.” His mother, Brenda, has long been an active supporter and volunteer worker in the ministry of UCRH. She has served on the Advisory Committee for the Gift and Thrift Shop and on the Abernethy Operations Council. In the summer of 2001 she accepted the challenge of service as the council’s chairperson.



Mr. J.W. Abernethy presenting the keys to a late model car to Rev. C. Phillip Laucks. Looking on are Dr. Laurence Leonard and Mr. R. Walker Geitner.



Brian Eckard with mother, Brenda, after receiving his Eagle Scout award.



Rosie Ross and family celebrating her birthday in January 1991.

It is important to celebrate special days in a person's life, and that should not change when people need nursing home care. Remembering those joyous times with family and experiencing some new ones are important to quality of life. Here a family remembers the birthday of their loved one. The nursing homes of UCRH are open to visits from family and friends at any time.

Mr. and Mrs. Gilmore Leonard contracted to build a cottage on Frank Circle at Piedmont Center. As with many of the early cottages, the residents helped with the design and



Mr. and Mrs. Gilmore Leonard with Donald P. Flick, Executive Director, and Russell Myers, Piedmont Center Administrator.

paid for the dwelling as it was constructed. There were certain guidelines and standards the design was required to meet in order to make it usable by older adults. The cost of the independent living unit could exceed the maximum established by UCRH, but the equity in the Use-for Life Agreement was never more than the allowable amount.



Donna Scott, beautician for over twenty years.

One of the important things for women residents, particularly those in the nursing unit, is to get their hair styled on a regular basis. The centers have well-equipped "hair care shops" open to everyone. Ms. Donna Scott came to Abernethy Center in 1980 and has provided services to the residents for nearly twenty-one years. She has cared for the hair of many residents who could not afford to pay for services, but Donna says that this is her family, and she loves her work.

It says a lot about the quality of a facility when the people who have served on the board and/or committees in helping to plan for that facility become residents by their own choice. They not only become residents, but often they continue to support the ministry in a variety of ways. Pictured here are only a few of the people who worked to help make UCRH a wonderful ministry with inviting places to live and work.

J.T. and Irene Baxter Morton moved to Piedmont Center in 1993. Mr. Morton had been president of the board. He helped establish a workshop on campus after becoming a resident and provided for the facility items such as a cross and an altar for the chapel.



Clarence Pierce presenting a contribution to D. Lee Jessup the Director of Development for UCRH.



Mr. J.T. Baxter Morton and his wife, Irene, in their duplex at Piedmont Center.

Mr. Clarence Pierce moved to Piedmont Center in 1991. He had been secretary of the Board of Directors, and shortly after he moved into his cottage he made a significant contribution to the Benevolent Trust Fund.



Margaret Davis working on material to be placed in the historical files at Abernethy Center.

Mrs. Margaret Davis moved to Abernethy Center in 1989. She had been a member of the first committee appointed in 1956 to investigate the feasibility of establishing a "Home for the Aged" that eventually became UCRH. Soon after moving to the center she took on the task of providing and keeping up an historical room.

Henry and Ernestine Kennedy have been active in helping to establish and shape the ministry of UCRH. Ernestine was a member of the first Board of Directors (1958), and Henry was a member of

the first Piedmont Operations Committee (1977). They have always been generous contributors to this ministry. They gave a 1.5-acre piece of property to help make the site for Piedmont Center a more desirable location for a CCRC.



Henry and Ernestine Kennedy in front of their cottage in Shuler Village at Piedmont Center.

Meet Staff Dedicated To Helping Persons Add Life To Years!



Staff (left to right) Dewey Welch, Hazel Hill, Larry Sink, Yvonne Kaiser and Donald Flick in meeting, 1984.

The staff of each center meets regularly, usually at least on a weekly basis, to deal with the challenges and concerns of daily operations. Pictured are key staff persons at such a meeting at Abernethy Center in 1984. They are Dewey Welch, Director of Maintenance, Hazel Hill, director of housekeeping, Larry Sink, director of nursing, Yvonne Kaiser, director of dietary, and Donald Flick, administrator of UCRH.

Kim Harris came to Abernethy Center in 1991 as the Program Coordinator for Independent Living residents, and due to his dedication to working among older adults, he has held several responsible positions over the past ten years. His present position is Director of Marketing. Mrs. Lillian Campbell came to work at the center in 1990 as Administrative Secretary and has assisted four different administrators, Bob Elliott, Shuford Abernethy, Isaac Kuhn and Steve Paterson. She is one of those fine persons who work quietly behind the scenes to help complete all the details necessary to a complex organization.



Kim Harris and Lillian Campbell with resident Mary Lou Dixon.



Administrative team, 1995 at Blowing Rock Assembly Grounds.

Team planning became an important part of the growth of UCRH in the 1980s and 90s. This photo is from a two-day retreat for corporate staff and administrative staff of the centers at Blowing Rock Assembly Grounds. The persons attending this retreat were: Shuford Abernethy, Gary Hurd, Mary Wesley, Steve Paterson, Susan Dunlap, Lee Jessup, Betty Pfeiler and Donald Flick.

It has been the practice of UCRH to recognize persons for years of service as faithful employees. In this photograph three individuals are being honored in 1994 for twenty years of service. Those recognized were: Shirley Callahan, LPN at Abernethy Center, Larry Sink, Director of Nursing at Abernethy Center, and Joyce Reidenbach, Executive Secretary in the corporate office.



Shirley Callahan, Larry Sink and Joyce Reidenbach, 1994.

Many persons who have help make UCRH such a fine ministry have been honored by groups beyond the corporate structure. Here Beth Trouille, who came to work at Abernethy Center in 1980, accepts the Nursing Service Award for 1997 from the Executive Director of the North Carolina NonProfit Homes Association, Mr. Tom Schoeovogel. Beth has served as the Village Nurse and the Nursing Supervisor of Independent Living residents, including the clinic, for many years. She is much loved by residents and staff for her fine skills, professional manner and deep concern for their well being. One of her co-workers said: "She is my Florence Nightingale, and the model of a nurse. The residents love her, consider her 'angel' and have the greatest confidence in her abilities." Beth is chairperson for the Catawba County Alzheimer's Association and signs for the deaf in her church. She is certified in Geriatrics.



Beth Trouille receiving Nurse Service Award.

One way to help keep persons out of the nursing units was to provide home visits by a registered nurse. The independent living residents' contracts included twelve nursing unit days per year. With a nurse available to visit in the units, a person could spend a few days in nursing, following a hospital stay and then return more quickly to their units. Here the Village nurse, Rose Bogier, visits and cares for resident Katheryn Pollock in her apartment at Piedmont Center.



Rose Bogier, Village nurse and Katheryn Pollock at Piedmont Center in Katheryn's apartment, 1991.

UCRH organized and staffed one of only a few medical-model adult day care programs in North Carolina. This was not

a program that was able to show a break-even operational budget, but it was and is a wonderful service to the community. It was licensed to accommodate fifty-two clients in 1989 when the Residential Mall opened. Ms. Amber Triplett (McIntosh) was the first full-time director. Ms. Triplett went on to become a licensed nursing home administrator.



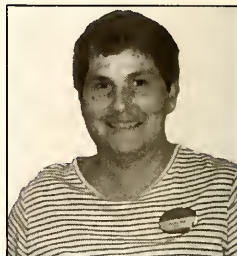
Adult Day Health Care Staff and clients Willie Turner, a certified nursing assistant, and the director of the program, Amber Triplett are pictured with two clients.



Front row: Jaydene Gallaway and Glenda Hensen. Back row: Linda Goble, Beth Trouille and Mary Stallings.

One of the reasons UCRH has been able to maintain such a high quality of care is the dedication and commitment to ministry of so many long-term employees. Here, five employees of Abernethy Center represent a total of more than one hundred years of employment. Each of these five women has been in service at the center for more than twenty years.

Brenda Mull came to work at Abernethy Center in 1978 as a certified nursing assistant, and is another person with more than twenty-five years of service. She has been willing to work wherever she is needed, and always does so with a smile. She currently serves in the clinic with Beth Trouille.



Brenda Mull

Employees often become caught up in the mission of UCRH and it becomes their own personal mission. Louise Wallace and Ella Scott came to work at Piedmont Center as certified nursing assistants during its first year of operation, as did Nancy Mincey. They have been in their positions for nearly fifteen years and are pleased they can help continue the dream of the persons who made this facility possible. In the background is a picture of the persons who contributed the major part of the site for Piedmont Center and the house that was on the property. It was the home place of Charles and Anise Shuler, and those who remember the house tell how unusual it was. It had cables stretched from the corners of the house to the ground to "keep it from being blown away." Board members who have been involved in real estate and in construction said, "We had never seen anything like it before or since."



Left to right, Louise Wallace, CNA, Nancy Mincey, Personnel Department, and Ella Scott, CNA, Piedmont Center.



Left to right, Brian Sickbert, Executive Director CHHSM, Donald Flick, Dale Bennett, Philip Laucks.

In 1995 Dr. Donald Flick, Executive Director of UCRH, was honored by the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries of the United Church of Christ as Executive Director of the Year. At the same meeting of the council, Mr. Dale Bennett was presented a plaque naming him Volunteer of the Year for his services to benevolent institutions of the church. Among other things, Dale helped with the marketing of Phase II at Piedmont Center. The plaques were presented by Brian Sickbert, executive for the council, and C. Philip Laucks, who was the chairman of the awards committee. The plaques were presented at a meeting in Baltimore, Md.

Mr. Joel Shaw came to work at Abernethy Center in 1982, right out of high school, and assumed the position of Director of Maintenance when Mr. Dewey Welch retired in 1984. He has continued to educate himself in all types of maintenance and knows more about the inside workings of the many components of the campus than anyone else. He was honored by the North Carolina Non-Profit Homes Association when he received the Distinguished Service Award in 1998.



Joel Shaw



Mary Martin, Carrie Martin and Elizabeth Coker

For a time meals were served in the Village Commons at Abernethy Center, in the 200 apartment complex. Mary Martin from the dietary department was one of the staff persons responsible for this service. In this photograph, she is shown with village resident Carrie Martin, who moved from Lenoir to Abernethy Center in 1982, and Elizabeth Coker, long-term volunteer from Sierra Leone.

UCRH has been involved in bond financing for both Piedmont Center and Lake Prince Center. Tax-exempt



Mona Huffman, Robert McKemy, Jr. and Phil Laucks at signing of papers for bond issue for Lake Prince Center

bonds issued by a state entity for the purpose of constructing medical facilities of nonprofit continuing care retirement communities is a wonderful method of financing projects. In many cases it is the only feasible way. It is not an easy procedure, but one that has a lot of merit. There are a lot of requirements and many agreements to be negotiated and many papers to be signed. Pictured here are the many documents to be signed to provide the funding for the construction of Lake Prince Center in 2001.



Rev. Van D. and Mrs. Edith Grimes, along with members of their family at a retirement event for Van on May 15, 1990.

The Grimes family has a long historical relationship with UCRH. Edith served on the Board of Directors from 1970-1973 and as its secretary during that time. She currently serves on the Abernethy Operations Council. Van has contributed his time and skills to this ministry in a variety of ways, from fundraiser to Chaplain to full-time staff member. He served as Administrator of Abernethy Center from 1984 to 1990, with major responsibility for overseeing the construction of the Residential Mall. Both of Van's parents, Raymond and Daisy Grimes, were residents of UCRH in their later years. His sister and brother-in-law, Ernestine and Henry Kennedy, became residents of Piedmont Center in 1998.

Van and Edith will always have a tangible relationship with UCRH, since the house they built in 1951 where they lived as newlyweds was purchased by UCRH in

2001. The house had been moved from its original location to land that was adjacent to Piedmont Center. The house and land were purchased to help enlarge the Piedmont Center site.

In 1996 the Development Office had afghans prepared for the twenty-fifth anniversary of UCRH, which told the story in picture form of the first twenty-five years of ministry. These afghans were prepared for sale, but were often presented as gifts to persons on special occasions. Here one is being presented to Ms. Lois Mitchum, who retired from her work at Abernethy Center after nearly twenty years of service. She was a devoted employee who was dedicated to this ministry and gave extra measure to reach out in love in response to the needs of older adults. During her years of service with UCRH she was a department head in activities and social services and was especially appreciated for the fine work she did in organizing and maintaining the volunteer program of the center. After leaving in 1996 she went back to school to become a certified nursing assistant, and returned to work part time.



Steve Paterson presenting Lois Mitchum an afghan.

UCRH has a reputation for providing very fine nursing services. The main reason for this is the wonderful staff and their dedication to keeping current with the best available information in the field of geriatric nursing. Pictured here are five nurses who have pursued extra training and have received recognition as certified geriatric nurses. This training "helps them understand the complexities of the aging process and helps them explain the difficulties of aging to concerned family members."



Left to right: Beth Trouille, Linda Settlmyre, Linda Goble, Jenny Baxter and Jean Rollins.

Meet Members of the Board of Directors Who Are Committed to Helping Shape Programs and an Organization that Adds Life to the Years of Older Adults!

The Board of Directors is made up of eighteen persons elected by the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ. Suggestions for board members are made by the executive committee of UCRH, but the Conference elects the persons at their annual meeting. Effort is made to make sure all segments of the Conference are represented. Persons are elected to a three-year term and may succeed themselves for a second term, at which time they must go off the board for at least a year. The bylaws call for the board to meet twice each year. The board meetings are usually held at one of the cost centers of UCRH so that members can view the operations firsthand and the residents can get to meet some of the members of the board who are responsible for this ministry.



Board of Directors' meeting, Piedmont Center 1995.

The term of office for board members is staggered so that only three or four members go off each year. The newly elected members for 1987 were: Mr. Lester Stocks, Ms. Gladys Sawyer and Mr. J.T. Morton.



Lester Stocks, Gladys Sawyer and J.T. Morton.

New board members are installed and new officers are elected at the semiannual meeting held in the fall of the year, usually in August.



The new members of the board for 1988 were: (left to right) Orin Whitener, Helen Rippy, Holland Brady and Albert Lofland, Jr.



New members of the Board of Directors and elected officers from left to right, front row: Cecil Smith, Jamie Fonville, Betty Hawn, Viola Mitchell and Wilmer Brown. Back row: Thomas Tiemann, Gregory Alcorn, Jack Frank and Dwight Hedrick.

Officers of the Board of Directors are elected and installed each year at the semiannual board meeting. New members of the board are elected by the Southern Conference at its spring meeting and installed at the UCRH board meeting in the fall. Here are the 1994 officers and board members who were installed at the board meeting on Aug. 27, 1993 at Suffolk Christian Church, Suffolk, Va.

The Executive Committee is composed of four officers of the board, the immediate vice-president, a member-at large and the chairpersons of the Operations Councils of the centers. The elected officers for 1994 were: Thomas Tiemann, member-at-large, Jack Frank, vice president, Jamie Fonville, president, Viola Mitchell, secretary, Dwight Hedrick, treasurer.



Rev. Roy E. Leinbach, Jr., Chairperson of Operations Council in monthly meeting with Katrina Yurish, Marketing Director, Jo Anne Flick, Administrative Assistant and Lillian Campbell Administrative Secretary, with Sue Jessup sharing concerns.

The bylaws of UCRH call for an Operations Council to be organized for each unit/center. These councils are elected by the Board of Directors and are accountable to them. Those elected are to be from the community where the unit/center is located and be representative of that community. Persons are elected for a three-year term and may serve two consecutive terms. The chairperson of the council is an ex-officio member of the board. It is the responsibility of the Operations Councils to help advise and support the administration of the unit/center. Over the years the name of this group and the responsibility assigned to it has changed, but Abernethy Center had such a group as early as 1974. The bylaws and the Manual of Duties of UCRH clearly spell out the



William Crawford receiving plaque from Executive Director Rev. Laucks.

functions of this group. It was first conceived as a way to help motivate local support for the ministry and be a conduit for keeping lines of communications open to administration for residents and the wider community.

It became a tradition early in the life of UCRH for an appreciation plaque to be given to persons for their service to the Board of Directors. The bylaws provide for a person to be able to serve two three-year terms and then they must go off for at least a year before serving again. The plaques have often been presented to individuals in their home congregations, so that fellow church members can understand that this is their ministry and is administered by United Church persons from the Southern Conference. Here a plaque is being presented to Mr. William Crawford for his years of service by the Executive Director, Rev. Philip Laucks.

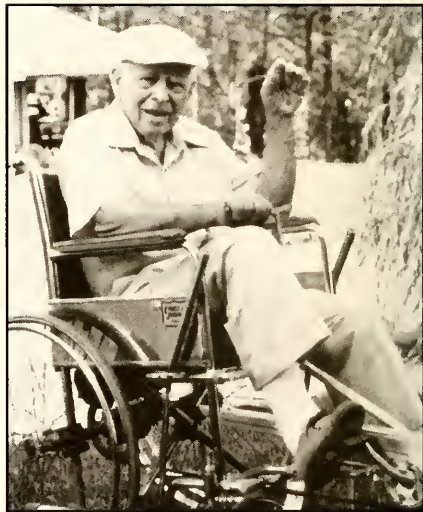
Meet Residents Who Have Discovered the Meaning of Adding Life to Years!



Lucy Lynch, resident of Abernethy Center along with John Pancoast, Helen Fisher, Nellie Tarpy and Frances Tuerffs, 1995.

Andre DePorry and his wife, Mary Frances, came to Abernethy Center in April of 1982 as one of the first couples to move into the village. He suffered from Parkinson's disease, and while he was at the center participated in a research project at Duke University. He published a newsletter for the Parkinson's Society and built a wheelchair that he was able to operate with his feet. The chair was affectionately referred to as "Parky."

A resident who came to one of the centers when she was relatively young, at age 69, was told by a friend that people go to such places to die. She promptly told the person, "I'm not going there to die; I'm going there to live!" and live she has. She has been the life of the party, so to speak, and has endeared herself to residents and staff alike. She has made wonderful new friends and has discovered a very meaningful support community. She feels secure and has truly discovered the meaning of the motto of UCRH, "Adding Life to Years."



Andre DePorry



Mary Ayers Campbell in center of picture with members of the Home Economics Club getting ready to board the Abernethy Center bus.

1987. Vans with chair lifts are also necessary to transport nursing home residents. Pictured here exiting the bus are members of the Home Economics Club of Catawba County. They are being hosted by Mary Ayers Campbell, a resident of Abernethy Center who moved there in 1989.

Persons who move to the centers often become very involved in the activities of the wider community. Pictured here is Mr. Einar Anderson, who came to Abernethy Center with his wife, Ethel, in 1981. He is dressed in his World War I uniform in preparation for the Old Soldiers Reunion Parade in Newton, N.C. For several years he helped with the planning for this celebration.

Transportation is always one of the main concerns of residents. As the villages grew at each of the centers, priority was given to acquiring a bus to take persons to various community activities. The first new bus was purchased for Abernethy Center in



Einar Anderson



Ned and Maude Gibbs

Ned and Maude Gibbs were one of the first couples to move into The Village at Piedmont Center in 1986. They quickly helped form a community spirit among the residents and Ned became affectionately known as "The Mayor." The Gibbs have three sons who appreciate knowing their parents live in a secure and inviting place. They love to visit with them at Piedmont Center and experience as a family how the decision to make this their home has added life to the years of their parents. Ned and Maude like to brag about their sons, and well they should. They were especially proud in 1998 when their son Alex appeared on television in the Super Bowl. He is the offensive line coach of the world champion Denver Broncos.

Addie and Donald Rhodes moved into a cottage on the campus of Piedmont Center in



Addie and Donald Rhodes in their cottage on Shuler Circle.

1987. They moved from Silver Springs, Md., and are representative of how UCRH has attracted persons from many sections of the country. They also are a good example of how a CCRC is able to provide services at the various cycles of life. When the Residential Mall was opened in 1996 they found their needs and ability to function completely independently had changed. They were able to move into a well-appointed and suitable apartment. In the mall they could walk to meals and have immediate access to nursing services. Their apartment was equipped with a kitchen so they could prepare some meals if they so desired.



Anne S. Rankin in Health Care Room.

A meaningful human interest story related to UCRH is woven around the life of Anne Shuford Rankin. Mrs. Rankin was the mother of Adrian L. Shuford, Jr., who contributed much to the formative years of Abernethy Center. She provided guest quarters for Mr. Timothy Wepner in 1976-77 when he was serving as the first long-term volunteer at the center from Wisconsin. During this year he met and fell in love with Anne Abernethy, the daughter of Claude S. Abernethy, Jr. and the niece of J.W. Abernethy, Sr. Tim and Anne married and today are both ordained ministers in the United Church of Christ. Anne Rankin was a resident in the health care unit in the early 1980s, and upon her death UCRH was willed half interest in her house in Conover, N.C. Consideration was given to converting this dwelling into a community-based group home setting for older adults, but all of the necessary details could not be worked out. The house was sold, and the money realized from the sale became some of the initial fund that

was used to establish the Benevolent Trust

Fund to provide help for nursing home residents who have outlived their assets.

Ray Hayworth is an example of the kind of person who helps make Piedmont Center an interesting and exciting place to live. Since coming to the center he has enjoyed his relationship with both residents and staff. He loves to welcome people into his apartment and tell them about his baseball memorabilia. Ray was a teammate of Ty Cobb when they were with the Detroit Tigers. Ray was catcher with that National League team from 1929-38. He also played for Brooklyn Dodgers (1938-39) (1944-45), New York Giants (1939), and St. Louis Browns (1942).



Ray Hayworth

Worthwhile projects help add life to the years of persons in the health care units. The residents of Abernethy Center's Clapp-Leinbach Health Care Unit are proud of the quilt that hangs on the main hall which they helped create in 1991. In this picture a long-term and much loved resident, Eva Lefevers, shares the "hand" quilt that she helped to make.



Eva Lefevers

Over the years residents have contributed much to help make UCRH an effective and creative ministry. Mr. Joe Goble, a jeweler from Newton, N.C., moved to Abernethy Center in 1984 with his wife, Kathryn. He had been quite an outdoorsman all his life, so it was natural that he would want to help build trails and plant wildflowers to beautify the campus. He recruited the Boy Scouts to help build a trail, which was properly named after him, and has since helped to construct two other walking trails and other beautification projects. He also organized a hiking group with which he still hikes on a weekly basis.

Forrest and Virginia George came to live at Abernethy Center in September 1989. They came from Centerville, Mass., and immediately found a new and exciting life together with new friends and new opportunities for living. It is safe to say the community of Abernethy Village was never the same, because they brought with them constant smiles and warm personalities that were catching. They helped to shape relationships that brought joy and meaningful friendships to everyone they met. They helped UCRH with a program presented to local groups in an effort to "Bring Your Perception of Retirement Living Into the 90s."

Katie and Henry "Hank" Germond came to Abernethy Center from Loudonville, N.Y., in November 1989. After experiencing what it means to be residents of a continuing care retirement community and how it indeed does "Add Life To Years," they worked with the Director of Development to establish the Henry N. and Katherine E. Germond Gift Annuity so other persons might experience quality living at a UCRH center. Hank was a former schoolteacher and principal, and Katie worked for the New York Telephone Co. Dr. Lee Jessup, in announcing this annuity said, "The Germonds have designated their gift in support of a community building on the campus of Abernethy Center, where a major emphasis will be placed on fitness, activities for independent older adults, and other events for older adults at the center and in the wider community."



Katie and Henry Germond



Joe Goble and trail.



Forest and Virginia George

Rev. William Griffith served as Chaplain at Abernethy Center but he was also a resident artist. He taught classes for residents and staff, and provided many paintings for the halls of both Abernethy and Piedmont Centers. One of his most appreciated paintings was "The Wheel", which symbolizes the statement often used by United Church Retirement Homes, "aging is the turning of the wheel ... the gradual fulfillment of life." The wheel also helps form the basis for the stained glass window depicting the mission statement of UCRH.



Rev. William Griffith and his painting, "The Wheel"

Special Observances

Anniversaries and United Church Retirement Homes Sunday

Anniversaries have always been a time to lift up special concerns of UCRH and to challenge persons and groups to be responsive to its ministries. August 1971 was chosen as the date for determining the anniversary year, although United Church Retirement Home(s), Inc. was incorporated Nov. 13, 1961, and the first building was dedicated on Oct. 31, 1971. The second Sunday in August was designated by the Southern Conference as United Church Retirement Homes Sunday in the early 70s. This date was later changed to the first Sunday in December, which was being observed across the denomination as Health and Welfare Sunday. The request was made to change the designated Sunday to December to avoid the summer vacation time, but it was soon discovered that the first Sunday in December was often the first Sunday in Advent. So Southern Conference was again very understanding and early in the 1990s voted to promote a Sunday in September as UCRH Sunday. Churches were encouraged to invite a speaker from UCRH to help members learn more about this church-sponsored and church-supported ministry. For many years UCRH printed bulletin inserts which were sent to the churches of Southern Conference for distribution to members. These inserts not only told something about UCRH, but often included a litany or prayer to help congregations see this as their own ministry and give God an opportunity to work through them to help strengthen and expand this exciting work. A sample, "Litany for Aging and Purposeful Ministry," shared for the fifteenth anniversary of UCRH in 1986, follows:

Leader: As a nation we are witnessing an aging of our population. Persons who have worked hard to make life secure for others are now looking forward to reaping a secure and purposeful life for themselves. People are living longer and are seeking to fill their later years with quality living and meaningful relationships.

People: What does this mean to us as Christians?

Leader: It means taking a look at how each of us deals with the idea of aging and how we respond to the concerns of older persons. It means helping our church develop new ways of reaching out to meet the needs of the elderly. It means supporting existing ministries designed to be responsive to the aging. It means discovering that the later years of life have the potential of being even more rewarding than the busy, demanding days of youth and middle age.

People: Then we have reason to celebrate aging!

Leader: Yes, we should celebrate our life in Christ at all ages!

People: What is our church doing in this area of ministry?

Leader: The church has been a leader in supporting creative ministry among the elderly, through government and private agencies, adult day care centers, senior centers, and many others. In the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ we have a special task force working on the concerns of the aging population. We have the United Church Retirement Homes offering two total life care communities in North Carolina and another proposed for Eastern Virginia. Persons have contributed generously to bring such nonprofit centers into being, and dedicated staff persons provide quality care for those who choose to make these retirement centers home.

People: Then let us celebrate this ministry as our own! Let us offer our prayers, our financial support, and our volunteer service to those persons and institutions who promote health and well being, acceptance and security, purpose and meaning for elderly persons on our behalf.

Leader: Yes, and let us offer special prayers that through us and other persons like us, these ministries may be strengthened and expanded. Let us pray that those older persons who have helped to show us the way of faith may experience the reality of programs and facilities where love is shared, where caring and security are known, and where Christian community is experienced daily. Amen.

People: Amen and Amen!

Anniversary Celebrations

Fifth Anniversary — 1976

New licensed nursing wing was begun. Rev. C. Philip Laucks resigned as Administrator/Executive Director, and Rev. Lawrence N. Strunk assumed that position.

Tenth Anniversary — 1981

First cottage dedicated at Abernethy Center in memory of Myrtle Smyre Rowe

A Capital Funds campaign was conducted across Southern Conference for the purpose of raising seed money for the construction of Piedmont Center in Thomasville, N.C.

Planning seminars were held with staff to put in place a long-range plan for the corporation

Fifteenth Anniversary — 1986

Piedmont Center was dedicated on Sept. 21, 1986, with Rev. Rollin O. Russell, Conference Minister of Southern Conference, as the speaker. Rev. C. Philip Laucks and Rev. Lawrence N. Strunk, former Administrators/Executive Directors, helped lead the litany of dedication.

Rev. D. Russell Myers was the Administrator of this new project and participated in the service.

Twentieth Anniversary — 1991

The SHARE Campaign was conducted across Southern Conference for the purpose of raising the needed seed money for the Eastern Virginia Center and adding money to the Benevolent Trust Fund.

A Memorial Garden was dedicated on the Abernethy Center campus on Sunday, Aug. 18.

Philip Moose presented a special painting prepared especially for UCRH titled "The Fulfillment of Life."

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary — 1996

Special mugs carrying the UCRH logo were purchased and distributed to the clergy of Southern Conference in an effort to raise the identity of this important ministry. The goal was to talk with all of the clergy concerning UCRH being seen as an outreach ministry of the local church.

A special anniversary banquet was held at Bethlehem Christian Church, Suffolk, Va., to celebrate progress being made towards the construction of a retirement center in Suffolk. The theme for this year was "Faithful to a Vision."

An anniversary hymn, "Faithful to a Vision," was written for the 25th Anniversary by Jo Anne Flick and used on various occasions by UCRH.

An anniversary celebration was held at Abernethy Center on Aug. 18, 1996, with the Rev. C. Philip Laucks as speaker. Rev. Laucks was Vice President of Homewood Retirement Centers in Williamsport, Md. The following litany expressed the significance of this occasion:

A Litany of Thanksgiving

Leader: For 25 years of ministry among older adults in the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ.

People: We give you thanks, O God.

Leader: For all those visionaries who dreamed and planned and labored throughout the years to make United Church Retirement Homes a reality.

People: We give you thanks, O God.

Leader: For the partnership of more than 300 churches and the generosity of those whose gifts make this ministry possible.

People: We give you thanks, O God.

Leader: For the staff, residents, board and Operations Council Members, and hundreds of volunteers who give their time to this important work.

People: We give you thanks, O God.

Leader: For the opportunity to "Add Life To The Years" of residents who find fulfillment in these secure and supportive communities.

People: We give you thanks, O God.

Leader: For the opportunity to be "Faithful To A Vision" which created and continues to recreate this wonderful ministry within the wider communities served by United Church Retirement Homes.

People: We give you thanks, O God.

Leader: Thanks be to God for the ministry of United Church Retirement Homes which is the ministry of all of us and for all of us.

People: Thanks be to God. Amen

Thirtieth Anniversary — 2001



Reverend John Thomas enjoys a visit with Reverend Nathaniel Guptill, a resident of Abernethy Center.

In celebration of thirty years, United Church Retirement Homes welcomed UCC President of General Ministries, John Thomas, to North Carolina. Reverend Thomas joined us for two special celebrations at Abernethy Center and at Piedmont Center. Each center hosted a worship service followed by fellowship and refreshments.

Reverend Thomas blessed us with inspirational messages during both services. His warm and personal demeanor added immensely to the celebrations. We look forward to having John Thomas join us in Virginia in the fall of 2002 for the Grand Opening of Lake Prince Center.

Faithful to a Vision

By Jo Anne Flick

(Hymn tune: "The Church's One Foundation")

Established on the dreaming of generations past,
Built on their gifts and labor, a vision that will last,
A ministry of love now fulfills their fondest hope:
A ministry of caring, of quality and scope.

With gratitude we pause now to celebrate these years:
An anniversary shaped by support and prayers and tears,
The leadership of all who envisioned such an hour,
The work of all who've given their best to see it flower.

Our mandate kept us faithful through years of toil intense,
For housing, programs, outreach to gracious residents.
Good stewards of resources, we've built with quiet pride;
Part of the Church's mission, with Christ our faithful guide.

By staff and volunteers working side by side, advanced
The dignity of persons, the whole of life enhanced.
We celebrate the leading of God continually,
Creating loving centers of sweet community.

The past shall be our teacher, the present our delight;
The future leads us onward with innovative might.
While adding life to years, may God help us carry on
With hope and strength, the work that we cannot do alone.

Help us, O God, continue the task begun so well,
Responding to the needs that the future will unveil.
Still faithful to a vision that time cannot erase,
Keep firm our strong commitment; God, keep us in your grace. Amen.

Section VI

Remember With Love

Gifts Help Make The Ministry Possible

Remember with Love and **Exercise Your Will Power** were two brochures printed by UCRH in 1983 to encourage persons to make contributions in memory or in honor of someone and to remember UCRH in their wills. These brochures emphasized that "the ability of this ministry to respond to the growing needs of the aging is often limited only by the lack of funds." This statement seems to have grown out of the experience of those responsible for this ministry from the time it was incorporated in November 1961. One of the persons who was active in helping to bring UCRH into being was asked why it took so long before something positive was accomplished. He stated, "We were offered some beautiful pieces of property for a retirement center but were expected to build on them where they were, and we didn't have the money. It wasn't until Mr. Abernethy offered to give both land and money that the board was in a position to move forward."

When you review the history of this important ministry, it is often the gift of money, of land or other assets that moves things to a new level or a new area of concern. It was the gift of land and matching money on the part of Mr. and Mrs. Julius Abernethy, Sr. that made the first structure available for carrying on ministry to the aged in the Newton, N.C., area. It was the bequest of Mrs. Anice Shuler of nearly 50 acres of suitable land in the Thomasville, N.C., area that inspired leaders to move forward with a second UCRH facility. It was the designation in the will of Mr. Zechariah Turner to provide money for a retirement facility in the Suffolk, Va., area that helped precipitate serious consideration of a retirement center in Eastern Virginia. It was the very generous bequest of Maye Morrison Abernethy in 1982 that enabled ventures to be undertaken that made UCRH one of the leaders in establishing new models for ministry among older adults. It was the contribution from Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Love and a bequest from Mrs. Annie Shuford Rankin, all of whom were residents at the time, that helped inspire the establishment of the Benevolent Trust Fund in 1987. It was the generous gift of an independent living resident, Ms. Ada Beatty, that moved the Board of Directors to establish a Residents' Assistance Fund to reach out to help provide assistance to independent living residents and to put in place an Education Fund for children of employees.



Ada Beatty receives Philanthropy award from Dr. D. Lee Jessup.

The aforementioned gifts of love and the hundreds of others unmentioned, along with the guiding spirit of God in the lives of dedicated leaders, have made the work of UCRH possible.

The aforementioned gifts of love and the hundreds of others unmentioned, along with the guiding spirit of God in the lives of dedicated leaders, have made the work of UCRH possible.

Gifts of love have not only made this ministry possible but have made quality service and care available to many to whom it would not otherwise have been available. A past president, when questioned regarding his thoughts about UCRH, stated that he was "sorry we seem to have the image that services are too costly." He went on to say, "Can you imagine what it would cost if we would not have had the millions of dollars in assets contributed over the years to make this all possible? If we are

going to meet the challenges of the future it will take the continued support of churches and individuals. Persons will need to remember with love and exercise their will power with regard to the work and ministry of UCRH if we are to continue to remain on the cutting edge and be willing to take the risks necessary to the establishing of new models for ministry."

It is important to extend thanks to the Directors of Development who served over the past thirty years and to the many persons they have motivated to make charitable contributions to this ministry. One of the main thrusts of the Development Office over the past ten years has been encouraging individuals to establish a charitable trust or a gift annuity. These have been extremely important, especially for providing money for the Benevolent Trust Fund which helps persons who need care and have outlived their assets. These methods of reaching out to others are beneficial both to the individuals making the gifts and to the ministry for which the gift is directed. Dr. D. Lee Jessup, who served as Director of Development from 1993 to 2001 stated, "We are truly blessed at United Church Retirement Homes because our donors

believe in this ministry with and among older adults. More and more, I come in contact with people who want to give back to causes and benevolent institutions which have played a significant role in their lives." Contributions from persons who believe in the ministry of UCRH have made it possible for wonderful things to happen and thousands of persons to receive special care and enjoy quality living experiences. Concerns of older adults have been met and creative programs have been established.

Sincere thanks is extended to all persons who have established a charitable trust, made a gift annuity, or in any way helped establish funds or contributed to funds necessary to the dream and mission of United Church Retirement Homes.

Established Funds Speak of Concerns

There is evidence that there has always been a desire to "provide the highest quality of care to the elderly, at the lowest possible cost" as well as providing "those little extras" needed to help persons live more fulfilling lives. There is further evidence that more than having a concern for ministry among older adults, those responsible for the work of UCRH have always seen part of their ministry as also being responsible to employees. The statement, "There is a thin line between the ministry of UCRH to older adults and the concern for the employees who carry out the hands on ministry" causes the Board of Directors to struggle with keeping the resident rates as reasonable as possible and employee salaries and benefits as competitive and fair as possible.

Here is a partial listing of established funds to which contributions have been made over the years for the purpose of helping to carry on, expand, and improve the ministry of UCRH. Each of these funds has specific guidelines and policies for distribution which are kept current and updated to meet changing situations. Contributions have been sought and welcomed for all of these funds through the years to enable UCRH to carry on special ministries.

Sustaining Fund: (Established 1970s)

The Sustaining Fund was established very early in the life of UCRH to help provide quality care and dignified living for older adults who outlived their own assets. As the ministry grew a Sustaining Fund account was set up for each cost center so persons and congregations could designate where they wanted their contributions to be used. The money in the Sustaining Fund has been used to provide residents with those little extras that help give dignity to their lives, while the Benevolent Trust Fund is intended to help underwrite needed health care.

The Sustaining Fund has been the main account for which contributions have been solicited from the churches of the Southern Conference on UCRH Sunday. The guideline for the Sustaining Fund calls for 10 percent of the funds not used in any given year to be placed in the Benevolent Trust Fund Corpus.

Strunk Memorial Fund: (Established 1984)

This fund was established at the request of the Strunk family and was originally known as the Edith W. Strunk Memorial Fund in memory of Edith, who died while she was a resident in the health care unit of Abernethy Center in 1993. Upon the death of Rev. Lawrence N. Strunk, who died Feb. 12, 1996, additional money was added to the fund by family, friends and board action, and the fund was renamed the Strunk

Memorial Fund. This fund was designated to provide residents with "the little, nice things that add dignity and worth to aging individuals that otherwise would not be available to them." Rev. Strunk was Administrator/Executive of UCRH from 1976 to 1984. The corpus of the fund at that time was established at \$50,000.

Memorial Garden Fund: (Established 1985)

The Memorial Garden Fund was established in memory of Mrs. Elva Clifford, who was the wife of a Congregational minister (UCC) and who was a resident of the Abernethy Center Health Care Unit for nearly nine years. She died at the age of 102 in 1985, and her family and friends contributed to this fund in her memory.



Left to right, Elva Clifford, Cap Woodward CNA and Rev. Lawrence Strunk at Mrs. Clifford's 102nd birthday party.

The original fund was established for the purpose of providing an "appropriate place for the interment of the ash remains of residents of Abernethy Center, their families, and such others as may be approved by the Memorial Garden Committee."

A Memorial Garden was constructed in 1989 as "a place of meditation and prayer where persons can go to experience the beauty of the out-of-doors and reflect on life." A fee is charged for the interment and the perpetual care of the garden. The original fee was \$350 for interment or \$500 for husband and wife.

Benevolent Trust Fund: (Established 1987)

The Benevolent Trust Fund was established as an endowment fund for the purpose of reaching out in benevolent ways to help older adults who are in need, particularly those in need of health care. Contributions are solicited for this fund. Ten percent, or a tithe, of the interest income from other endowment money is to be placed in this fund. Any realized profit from gift shops open to the public are directed to this fund. The interest income from the corpus is to be used to help persons where the greatest need exists.

Corporate Trust Fund: (Established 1987)

The Corporate Trust Fund was established for the purpose of helping to underwrite the ongoing work of the corporation. The fund was designed to help minimize the impact of the corporation's functions upon the fees and rates of the residents by providing some funds for daily operation of the corporation. The fund also provides a means by which the corporation can investigate new avenues of ministry or have seed money available for new programs. The fund was established with an initial corpus of \$500,000, with only the income from the fund to be used for the designated purpose. The Development Office was authorized to seek additional money for the corpus of this fund.

Leinbach Education Fund: (Established 1988)

An Education Fund to help employees improve their skills and to help encourage interested persons to enter the field of ministry among the elderly was established in 1988 with an initial contribution from corporate funds of \$20,000. This fund was established because there was a growing need for qualified licensed personnel. There was a component of the fund to help encourage young people to enter the field of long-term care and/or retirement living by annually providing an award to a high school senior in each of the counties where the UCRH retirement communities were located. This fund was later renamed the Leinbach Education Fund in memory of Rev. Roy E. Leinbach, Jr., who died in 1993. Memorials in Rev. Leinbach's name from family and friends were placed in this fund with the corpus increased to \$50,000 by action of the board.

Elder Abuse Fund: (Established 1991)

An Elder Abuse Fund was established in August 1991 through the encouragement and help of the Catawba County Department of Social Services. It was created for the purpose of collecting and maintaining money to be used for the support of a program designed to minister to abused adults from the Catawba Valley area at Abernethy Center. The primary use of this fund was to provide money to house and care for abused older adults until secure permanent arrangements could be made. UCRH was presented an award through the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging for this program.

Scholarship Fund for Children of Employees (Established 1992)

Through an initial contribution by a resident, this fund was established to help encourage the children of persons working in the ministry of UCRH to pursue higher education goals and particularly professions related to the health care and retirement industry. The goal of this fund was to provide student loans, grants and scholarships for the children of UCRH employees who are enrolled in an institution of higher education. The guidelines state, among other things, that "...whenver possible and feasible, a \$250 scholarship gift will be awarded annually to a graduating senior child of an employee."

Employee Benefit Trust Fund (Established 1992)

In an effort to improve and help underwrite employee benefits such as medical insurance, vacation days, sick days and pensions, this fund was established in August 1992. The fund was originally established with "the hope that enough money would be accumulated over a period of time to provide at least full-time employees with some money in a pension plan. The investment income from this fund was to be distributed, by action of the board, for the purpose of helping to provide benefits to employees with as little impact on the cost center's budget as possible, thus maximizing take-home pay for employees."

Resident Assistance Fund (Established 1993)

This fund was established through the generous gift of a resident on the campus of Abernethy Center who wanted some persons who did not have the assets to pay the up-front admission fees for independent living to be able to enjoy the wonderful benefit of a continuing care retirement community. The Benevolent Trust Fund was set up primarily to assist persons needing health care, but this particular fund was established to offer assistance to persons who need and desire a creative community living experience. Potential residents must meet all of the criteria, and decisions are based on whether money is available at the time for such assistance.

Employee Assistance Fund (Established 1994)

This fund was established by the board of UCRH in recognition that from time to time employees suffer financial hardship because of family emergencies, natural disasters, injuries or illness and need some assistance. This fund was to “provide emergency, benevolent financial aid to employees who experience extreme hardship.” The objective of the fund was to “make money available to assist employees in need as expeditiously as possible and in a confidential manner.” It was a further objective to give persons a means by which they could respond to hardship concerns of employees in some responsible and meaningful way.

Spiritual Life Fund (Established 1995)

As a church-related ministry, UCRH has always felt the need to provide a chaplain on the staff of the continuing care retirement communities. The operating budget with the major part of the funds coming from residents was not always able to carry the cost of a person to be employed in this role. It was a dream to raise enough endowment money so that the income from such a fund could provide for a full-time chaplain on each campus. The board established this fund to encourage contributions and to give the director of development the approval to promote such contributions.

Memorial Fund

Gifts of honor and memorial gifts are encouraged to help carry on programs and planned ministry or to make available some specific items or programs for which funds may not otherwise be available. The fund is designed to be a holding fund for designated gifts. One such gift was the bequest of Ms. Frances Setzer, a former resident of Abernethy Center and a member of the Operations Council, who left 20 percent of her estate to “capital improvements of Abernethy Center.” The Board of Directors directed that this bequest should be designated for use in constructing a community building on Abernethy Center campus in her memory and as an expression of thanks for her dedicated service to this ministry.

A comment regarding the various funds appears in the board minutes of February 1997 and reflects both the significance and feasibility of such funds as UCRH changes and reorganizes to meet the current challenges and as it dreams new dreams and pursues new visions:

“Some would say the designation of funds for a specific purpose limits the flexibility of a corporation like UCRH and ties the hands of future board members and staff with respect to creative decision making, but the positive side is that it preserves and encourages commitment to meaningful ministry. It helps maintain a balance between bricks and mortar and the mission mandate to reach out to the least. The guidelines for all of the funds of UCRH are such that the board can make changes so that just as the funds have been established, they can be redirected.”

Section VII

Pursuing The Vision

Dedication Plaques

It has been the custom of UCRH to place a plaque in a prominent place of all major buildings constructed to carry on its ministry. These plaques relate a bit of history which should be preserved and they remind visitors and residents how persons have labored and sacrificed to help bring this ministry into being and provide attractive and functional structures necessary to carrying out the mission of UCRH. The following plaques help tell the wonderful story of providing ministries to enhance the quality of life of older adults. These plaques give credit to those persons who helped see that buildings were built and hopefully they will inspire others to take up the torch and keep this ministry relevant and growing.

1971

The United Church Retirement Home, Inc.

Directors

Lawrence A. Leonard, Chairman

Mrs. John M. Abernethy	Mrs. Van D. Grimes
Mrs. J. W. Abernethy	Dr. John R. Kernodle
Rev. James R. Cress	Mrs. J. M. King
Mr. Willie E. Everhart	Rev. Roy E. Leinbach, Jr.
Mr. H. Jack Faw	Rev. G. Melvin Palmer
Mr. Manley K. Fuller, Jr.	Rev. John W. Settlemire
Mr. R. Walker Geitner	Rev. Gordon H. Sperry

Benefactors

Dr. J. W. Abernethy	Mrs. J. W. Abernethy
Rev. C. Philip Laucks, Administrator	
Vernon E. Lewis, A.I.A. Architect	
Burlington, North Carolina	
Herman-Sipe Company, Contractor	
Conover, North Carolina	



Architect's rendering of first UCRH building, Newton, N.C.



Entrance Sign, J.W. Abernethy Center, United Church Retirement Home, Newton, N.C.

1977

In His Own Words,

"This Is The Finest Thing I Have Ever Done"

We Sincerely And Gratefully Agree

In This Spirit We Dedicate And

Name This Newton Project The

J. W. Abernethy, Sr. Retirement Center

United Church Retirement Home, Inc.

Claude S. Abernethy, Jr., President Of Board Of Directors

Dr. Roy E. Leinbach, Jr., Chairman, Newton

Advisory Committee

Lawrence N. Strunk, Administrator

1981
To One Whose Foresight Made
Possible A Headquarters For
The United Church Retirement Homes, Inc.
We Dedicate
This Morrison Building
To
Maye Morrison Abernethy
November 1981
Lawrence Strunk, Executive Director
Newton Operational Advisory Committee



*Morrison Corporate Office Building entrance to the offices,
Newton, N.C.*

1985
Clapp-Leinbach Nursing Unit
Named in Honor Of Two Individuals
Whose Dreams and Dedication Helped
Make Possible The Ministry Of The
United Church Retirement Homes, Inc.

Frank L. Clapp
Roy E. Leinbach, Jr.
November 24, 1985

By Action Of The Board Of Directors - March, 1985

C. Boyce Sink, President
Donald P. Flick, Executive Director-Administrator
Van D. Grimes, Administrative Assistant



*Dedication of Clapp-Leinbach Health Care Unit, Newton, N.C., with
C. Boyce Sink, President, Presiding. Left to right, (front) Boyce Sink,
Frank Clapp, Roy Leinbach, Fred Fox (back) Dick Cheek, Ronald
Vaughn, Roy Leinbach, Bill Reinhart and Robert Smith.*

Piedmont Center
United Church Retirement Homes, Inc.
1986

The Fulfillment of A Dream
Dedicated to the Glory of God
and to helping persons add life to years
Board of Directors

C. Boyce Sink, President Bobby Bonds, Secretary
Albert M. Allran, Vice President Roy E. Leinbach, Treasurer
Donald P. Flick, Executive Director
Piedmont Operation Committee
Jack Frank, Chair Hazel S. Myers, Secretary
Newman and Jones, P.A., Architect/Engineer
J. H. Allen, Inc. General Contractor



*Pictured are all three Chief Executive Officers of UCRH
at the Dedication of Piedmont Center, Thomasville, N.C.
Left to right, Donald Flick, Lawrence Strunk, Philip
Laucks and President of the Board C. Boyce Sink.*



Courtyard, Abernethy Center, Residential Mall, Newton, N.C.



Ground breaking, Residential Mall, Newton, N.C. Left to right, Wil Crawford, Robert Keppel, Harriet Kuhn and Ed Rogers

Residential Mall

Dedicated To The Glory of God And To The
Ministry Of Adding Life To Years

In Memory Of Maye Morrison and Julius Whitener Abernethy

1989

Board of Directors

Bobby R. Bonds, President

John W. Sellers, Secretary

James K. Ramborger, Vice President

Dwight L. Hedrick, Jr. Treasurer

Donald P. Flick, Executive Director

Abernethy Operations Committee

Edwin L. Rogers, Chairman

Harriet A. Kuhn, Secretary

Adrian L. Shuford, Jr.

Fred Y. Fox

Margaret R. Coley

William R. Crawford

Nevin H. Feather

Manley K. Fuller

Robert A. Keppel

Roy E. Leinbach, Jr.

Van D. Grimes, Administrator



Dedication Committee, Residential Mall, Newton, N.C. Left to right, Van Grimes, Jo Anne Flick, Yvonne Kiser, Virginia Irby, Ed Rogers, Margaret Coley and Nevin Feather



Ground breaking, Residential Mall, Newton, N.C. Left to right, Charles Moss, Van Grimes, Don Flick and C. Boyce Sink

Conclusion

This brief history and reflection on the first thirty years of ministry of UCRH is only a quick brush stroke at what has been a spiritual journey for most of the persons involved in this work. Surely this ministry is of God or it would not have enjoyed the success it has or touched the lives of so many people in such significant ways. The real history is not told in bricks and mortar, organizational and programmatic structures, or dedications and anniversary celebrations, but rather in the lives of residents, resident families, employees, volunteers, church members and community leaders who have discovered what it means to love and be loved, what it means to reach out to others and help add life to their years. This history is an overview to help people appreciate, to some degree, the importance of this ministry and the dedication of those who have made it possible. It should be, above everything else, an inspiration through which more people are challenged to take up the cause and do even greater things in the future than have been accomplished in the past. It should also enable persons to see God at work throughout this thirty-year journey.

It hasn't been easy to write a commentary history of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc., because the ministry represented here was always meeting new challenges and new opportunities. A variety of things were going on at the same time at different locations, and change was taking place almost daily with new things being undertaken before others were often integrated completely into the fabric that was being woven to help add life to the years of older adults. When Mr. C. Shuford Abernethy was employed as director of research and development in 1988, he said, "It's like walking on quicksand. It is hard to get a firm footing before things begin to move again." UCRH has been on the forefront of helping to mold the retirement/health care industry in the twentieth century, and certainly should continue to do so in the twenty-first century. This means things will always be changing, there will always be new challenges to be faced, new opportunities calling for creative responses.

As one looks at the involvement of UCRH in the flow of recent history, it appears as if those responsible for this ministry never settled down. They never seemed to have concentrated their efforts on making sure everything was in good working order before venturing out into new directions. This has been true in the past and will probably continue to be the norm, if UCRH is to stay on the cutting edge of things. Change and new directions, while often unsettling, have been and will be what helps keep UCRH responsive to the growing needs of older adults.

A publication of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging includes these words:

"The elderly population will nearly double from 1994 to 2020. Flexibility and appropriateness in meeting the individual older adults needs will be the key to successful service delivery in the next century."

Those responsible for the ministry of United Church Retirement Homes are constantly challenged to be faithful stewards and faithful servants, to dream new dreams and pursue new visions. This means continuing to allow God to lead them into new avenues of service and empower them to venture into areas of ministry yet untried. A writer reflecting on the biblical parable of the faithful servant says: "We miss the point of the parable if we fail to see that Christ wants his followers to be visionary and requires them to risk the hazards of the untried road." United Church Retirement Homes has been richly blessed and over the years has given evidence that it has been faithful to its mission. This means, among other things, that God will be challenging it to even greater things in the future, for scripture tells us that those who are faithful over a little will be called to do even greater things. The dream of more than forty years ago, that of establishing a meaningful and significant ministry in the Southern Conference among older adults, has been realized. Facilities have been built and programs carried out for thirty wonderful years. Now, even as this thirtieth year of ministry is celebrated, new doors are opening, new dreams are surfacing, new opportunities are beckoning, and God is ready to inspire and empower those called to this ministry to the successful pursuing of the vision in the coming years. Greater works than yet have been accomplished are on the horizon. Thanks be to God who has made and will continue to make it all possible.

Section VIII

Appendix

Much study has gone on over the years to make decisions regarding how to keep policies and procedures, plans and development, organizational and programmatic structures loyal to the charge placed before United Church Retirement Homes, Inc., and consistent with the adopted mission statement. The staff and Board of Directors have systematically involved themselves in retreats, workshops and seminars to produce meaningful long-range plans and meaningful vision statements. Each cost center, including the corporate office, has been directed to prepare written strategic plans so there is direction and purpose to things that are done and persons are not involved only in crisis management. At every step along the way, effort has been made to include the residents in some creative way in the planning process because "without the residents we would have no ministry."

Many documents giving evidence to the in-depth planning that has gone on and the results of such planning are available in the corporate files, but it seems appropriate to include herewith some of the board-adopted statements that help give direction to this ministry. It is these statements that help each new generation of staff, board members, volunteers and residents to stay focused. As persons take their positions, these statements help them pursue the vision of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc., and enables them, in new ways, to continue to fulfill the dream of providing quality retirement facilities for older adults and providing outreach ministries into the wider community to respond to the changing needs and concerns of older adults.

The statements included in this appendix were created and shaped by persons committed to the dream of an ever expanding and growing United Church Retirement Homes ready to meet whatever the challenges of the moment, and doing so within the context of Christian ministry. Others responsible for this ministry, in a new time, will create new statements with new guidelines, but these help provide the springboard for what is yet to come. The statements provided here, which help the reader understand the depth and scope of the work and ministry of United Church Retirement Homes are:

Philosophy Statement

Marketing Philosophy Statement

Stewardship, Morality and Ethics Statement

Spirituality Statement

Also included in this appendix is a copy of the long-range plans for each of the three retirement centers. The plans reveal the thinking in 1991 and in 2001 in order to emphasize again that this is a constantly changing ministry, ever ready to meet the circumstances and opportunities of the day. There will continue to be changes as resident needs and concerns change, as new circumstances create new challenges and as available resources help shape decisions.

Other items are included in this appendix for reference and study. They reveal a great deal of information concerning the history of UCRH in summary fashion.

Summary of Facilities Managed by UCRH

Current Resident and Employee Information as of Jan. 25, 2002

Glossary of Terms

Persons interested in more detail can contact the corporate office. Additional information is also available to the general public through the Disclosure Statement filed annually with the state Department of Insurance and a matter of public record.

This history is presented as a labor of love and with the hope that it will help inspire the persons who read it to deepen their support of and dedication to this important ministry.

Philosophy Statement

United Church Retirement Homes, Inc., as a Christian nonprofit ministry, believes in the dignity of human persons, recognizing that each person has physical, mental, social and spiritual needs and rights which are to be respected. Persons are to be helped to live to their fullest at every cycle of their lives and supported with understanding and empathy at the termination of life when death is inevitable. This ministry among the aging is dedicated to the promotion of wellness and the advancement of growth for residents, staff and the greater community.

United Church Retirement Homes is dedicated to helping individuals remain as independent as possible for as long as possible while providing opportunities for living quality-filled lives. We will make every effort to provide affordable programs, housing opportunities and services to persons regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, disability or sex. We seek to preserve the dignity and worth of the individual as we strive to reach out in the spirit of love. We are committed to carrying on charitable work in response to community needs and we seek the necessary funds to make this possible.

We believe people must feel good about their decision to move to a retirement community. There are persons who can benefit from living in a total-life retirement community and effort should be made to tell our story in order to open alternative living opportunities to the older adult population that will enhance their well-being.

Our approach to persons is not primarily to care for them, but to offer them support and challenges that will enable them to experience the highest possible quality of life according to their particular circumstances. Supportive services shall be provided by the exercise of responsible stewardship of our resources. Program and organizational structure should be innovative with the goal of creating a meaningful community always present.

We believe that in order to carry out meaningful ministry it is necessary to establish certain criteria related to living opportunities, and that staff has the responsibility of helping people live and function at a level which is best suited to their circumstances and which best contributes to the well-being of the whole retirement community. It is further believed that United Church Retirement Homes is entitled to payment for services rendered and residents and responsible parties must assume the responsibility for this payment if the ministry is to continue to fulfill its mission.

We believe our ministry is to staff as well as residents. Employment should be based on qualifications and the ability to function effectively regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, disability or sex. We believe that personnel should be of good moral character and willing to uphold a high ethical code. Every effort should be made to provide persons with a good working environment, adequate competitive wages, and meaningful benefits. Education programs, in-service meetings and planned activities to mold persons together as a working team are important to a healthy organization.

We believe the church must become more involved in responding to the concerns of the growing elderly population and that United Church Retirement Homes is an integral part of the church's ministry. Effort should be made to establish stronger partnership bonds between local churches and this outreach ministry.

We dedicate the efforts of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc., to the foregoing philosophies.

Marketing Statement

United Church Retirement Homes, Inc., recognizes the need for intentional promotion of its facilities and services. All marketing efforts should be carried out in the context of ministry and in ways that honestly promote alternative living opportunities without being manipulative or coercive. Promoting retirement living in a total-life retirement community should be done in the spirit of helping prospective residents and their families understand that this is a living option designed to help improve the lifestyle and sense of well being of those who choose to live here. The goal of United Church Retirement Homes is to provide a living environment that grows and changes in ways that uniquely meet the needs of older adults.

United Church Retirement Homes recognizes that employees, residents, volunteers and persons in leadership positions are all involved in “telling our story,” and thus they are involved in marketing. All of these individuals must therefore always be kept as well informed as possible and must be supported in ways that will help them maintain a positive attitude about the services and care being offered. This group of people can be the main source of prospective residents and should be recognized for their contribution in this area of concern.

United Church Retirement Homes will have certain persons who will participate to a greater degree in the marketing process than others. These individuals should approach prospective residents with the goal of doing what is in the best interest of the individual. It must be understood that retirement living at a United Church Retirement Homes’ facility is not for everyone and a variety of restraints make it impossible to be responsive to the needs and desires of even some individuals who might want to become a resident. It is, however, recognized that persons often have a difficult time making the decision to move from one style of life to another even when everything points to it being a wise choice. Persons promoting this ministry should not hesitate to help people make an informed decision when it is felt it is in the best interest of the person. Marketing efforts many times make it possible to be of service to persons who unknowingly are waiting to be asked to consider United Church Retirement Homes as a living opportunity.

An integral part of marketing is public relations and promotion — reaching out to inform and educate people concerning what is available to be responsive to their needs. Techniques compatible with our mission are to be used to give individuals in our churches and the wider community a good feeling about the ministry of United Church Retirement Homes. Promotional efforts should open to a variety of persons the option of choosing to live in a retirement community as they move toward the fulfillment of the life cycle and decisions need to be made regarding a person’s style of living. Independent Living Units are marketed to persons regardless of race, color, creed, national origin or religious affiliation as long as the individual meets all of the necessary admission criteria.

Approved August 1991

United Church Retirement Homes, Inc.
Newton, N.C.

Stewardship, Morality and Ethics Statement

Stewardship

As we are accustomed to God's bountiful provision of the earth's resources, it is easy to take our abundance for granted. It is therefore imperative that we constantly strive to conserve our natural resources and human-made equipment and supplies. Conservation not only means stewardship of God's endowments, but it also makes possible our special ministry at minimum resource use and thus the lowest possible cost. We can therefore offer our ministry to those whose income is insufficient for expensive care. Taken seriously, stewardship eliminates waste and duplication. It often results in better ways of accomplishing goals. It requires that we utilize resources, supplies and equipment for as long as is feasible.

Moral Standards

In the final analysis, morality is a matter of value judgment. It depends on socioeconomic values, on the cultural environment, on the place and time under consideration, and finally on any religious orientation. It is therefore possible to have different persons making contrasting morality judgments. Nevertheless there can be some basic standards established as morality is defined for the purpose of this document. Morality here involves respect for the individual in daily dealings, recognizing personal "rights," and that each person is indeed created in God's image. Morality is also conducting one's self as a "respected" member of a community.

Ethics

To be ethical is to be honest, to treat others as one would wish to be treated, and in all dealings attempt to put no one at any disadvantage. Ethics is often a matter of a "point of view." For instance, is it ethical to maximize profits or minimize costs? To the consumer of goods and services, to charge a price that maximizes profits is unethical. Yet, in the long run, entrepreneurs in such a market will produce more, and prices will fall. To minimize costs implies paying wage rates that are no more than is necessary to acquire the quality and quantity of employees needed. To some this would be unethical. In a free enterprise system there is nothing unethical in either case. In this ministry to be ethical is to do one's work in an honest way, basing all actions on established policies and procedures. It is also necessary to act "in the open" and accept accountability for all actions.

United Church Retirement Homes, Inc.

Newton, N.C.

1995

Spirituality Statement

"You are God's temple, and God's spirit dwells in you." (1 Corinthians 3:32)

Spirituality is a positive response to the spirit of God which dwells within each human being. It is the recognition that the God who breathed life into each living human also proclaims them heirs of "a kingdom not made with hands." Spirituality is the process by which persons discover their meaning and their destiny. It is the means by which individuals discover their rightful relationship with God, giving reality to a faith which is necessary for creatively facing life and death issues. Spirituality should motivate both what is done by United Church Retirement Homes and how it is done!

United Church Retirement Homes recognizes that persons are both body and soul, with both physical and spiritual needs and rights which are to be respected. Christian ministry among older adults must go beyond what is required by regulatory agencies as it seeks to be responsive to spiritual needs and concerns. Providing opportunities for older adults to add life to their years means offering experiences through which both residents and employees can support one another in their search for a meaningful relationship with God.

United Church Retirement Homes carries on its work in the midst of a highly technical and materialistic society with many pressures and laws requiring it to be attentive to the physical. It must function within this setting, but it must not "let the world squeeze it into its mold." It must be true to the calling of God and move beyond to "a new heaven and a new earth."

United Church Retirement Homes understands it came into being through God's spirit working through the church to evoke a visible ministry for reaching out in love to meet the needs of older adults. It therefore views spirituality as being central to its life and mission and looks to God for guidance and support in planning and decision making. As servants of God, United Church Retirement Homes understands that this relationship should influence every facet of corporate activity from resident care to preparation of the budget, from construction of buildings to the writing of investment policies, from personnel policies to social services.

United Church Retirement Homes embraces the faith expressed in the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith and seeks to provide programs and experiences which challenge individuals to grow in that faith. However, services are available to persons of all faiths or to those who profess no faith. It is the belief that individuals have the freedom to make their own choices regarding their relationship with God. A climate should be created wherein residents, employees and visitors can sense the presence and power of God.

United Church Retirement Homes seeks to witness to the love and promises of God as persons face some of the most traumatic and difficult times of their lives. Effort is made to create a community where persons can truly experience aging as a fulfilling time of life and understand dying as being worthwhile. Healing the physical is not always possible, but it is possible to provide spiritual nurturing and support in order to move persons successfully through physical problems or stressful situations.

It is the goal of United Church Retirement Homes to be responsible and compassionate stewards when providing care for the physical and to be committed and dedicated servants when it comes to spreading the good news of Jesus Christ and awakening the spirit of God in individual's lives.

Approved 1995

United Church Retirement Homes, Inc.
Newton, N.C.

Summary of Facilities Managed by UCRH

Centerclair
Nursing Care Residence
185 Yountz Road
Lexington, North Carolina 27292

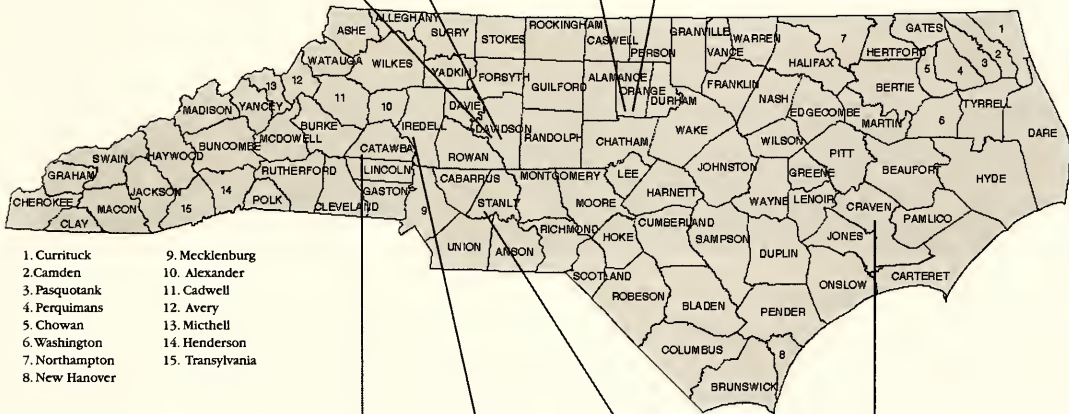
Shepherd House
Assisted Living
405 Smith Level Road
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27516

Covenant Place
Affordable Housing
103 Culbreth Road
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27516

Piedmont Center
Continuing Care Retirement Community
100 Hedrick Drive
Thomasville, North Carolina 27360

St. Joseph's Place
Affordable Housing
Durham, North Carolina

Lake Prince Center
Continuing Care Retirement Community
1001 Howell Boulevard
Suffolk, Virginia 23434



Abernethy Center
Continuing Care Retirement Community
100 Leonard Avenue
Newton, North Carolina 28658

NOAH (New Bern Older Adult Housing)
Affordable Housing
3800 Lofland Way
New Bern, North Carolina 28562

Emmanuel's Place
Affordable Housing
700 Wil's Way
Statesville, North Carolina 28677

Matthew's Place
Affordable Housing
Albemarle, North Carolina

Resident and Employee Information as of Jan. 25, 2002

United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. is a not-for-profit ministry affiliated with the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ. Originally chartered in 1961 our first community was developed in 1971 in Newton, N.C. Over the past thirty years we have grown from one facility caring for 60 residents to nine communities caring for 1,100 residents (projected for 2002). Through this growth and maturity our mission has remained clear and our belief in this organization as a ministry has never wavered. Below you will see an outline of our communities, dates established and services provided.

<u>Founded</u>	<u>UCRH Community</u>	<u>Independent/ Residential Living</u>	<u>Assisted Living</u>	<u>Nursing</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Occupied</u>	<u>Residents</u>	<u>Employees</u>
1971	Abernethy Center <i>Newton, NC</i>	180	18	174	372	347	395	248
1986	Piedmont Center <i>Thomasville, NC</i>	173	52	54	279	261	320	154
1998	Covenant Place <i>Chapel Hill, NC</i>	40			40	40	40	3
1998	Shepherd House <i>Chapel Hill, NC</i>		56		56	48	48	45
2000	Centerclair, Inc. <i>Lexington, NC</i>		6	60	66	66	66	70
2001	NOAH <i>New Bern, NC</i>	32				26	26	3
1981	Corporate Office <i>Newton, NC</i>							19
Total Current Units		425	132	288	813	788	895	542

<u>Opening Date</u>	<u>UCRH Community</u>	<u>Independent/ Residential Living</u>	<u>Assisted Living</u>	<u>Nursing</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Estimated Occupancy</u>	<u>Projected Residents</u>	<u>Projected Employees</u>
Feb. 2002	Emmanuel's Place <i>Statesville, NC</i>	37			37	37	37	2
July 2002	Lake Prince <i>Suffolk, VA</i>	130	40	56	226	210	291	132
Dec. 2002	St. Joseph's Place <i>Durham, NC</i>	32			32	32	32	3
2003	Matthew's Place <i>Albemarle, NC</i>	34			34	34	34	3
Total Units Proposed		233	40	56	329	313	394	140

	<u>Independent/ Residential Living</u>	<u>Assisted Living</u>	<u>Nursing</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Projected Occupancy</u>	<u>Projected Residents</u>	<u>Projected Employees</u>
Total Units By Fiscal Year 2003	658	172	344	1142	1101	1289	682

Glossary of Terms

UCRH — The ministry of United Church Retirement Homes, Inc. has been known by a number of different names from the time it was only a dream until today when it is carrying on an ever-growing ministry. It was chartered as United Church Retirement Home but as new components were added for which it was responsible it was changed from Home to Homes. Along the way as the ministry was expanded to include more than one center it was suggested that Home be changed to "Center" and as challenges were met for services to the wider community it was proposed to add the words "and Services to the Aging." After careful consideration of these suggestions it was determined to operate under the title United Church Retirement Homes, Inc.

In this history, UCRH refers to this ministry, whatever the title, rather than trying to spell out the full name each time.

CCRC — The accepted designation for a full-service retirement community by a variety of government agencies and by the retirement industry is continuing care retirement community. Because United Church Retirement Homes entered into this area of ministry so early there is reference in its history to "total-life retirement home" and "full-service retirement center or community." UCRH has grown with the industry and has often helped shape policy and procedures, particularly in the North Carolina arena.

UFL — This stands for Use-for-Life Agreement, which is the agreement entered into with a resident coming into an independent living unit. This is a term coined by UCRH as a nonprofit organization to indicate that units where people live on the campuses of the centers are not owned by the resident or even leased or rented to the resident, but through a special agreement are made available for the resident or residents to use as long as they are able to live independently.

Life Occupancy Fee — This is a fee that helps to underwrite a portion of the upfront development and administrative costs of the facility. It has had different names over the years such as Founder's Fee and Accommodation Fee.

Cost Centers — As UCRH grew it was necessary to find some term that could be used when referring to the various types of facilities for which this ministry had a responsibility. Cost center refers to any location where ministry is being carried on by UCRH where an operating budget is in place.

Older Adults — It is hard to find appropriate terms when referring to the persons for whom the ministry of UCRH was put in place. In the 1950s it was acceptable to talk about "a home for the aged" or "old folks home" and in the 1960s and 1970s people talked about "senior citizens" or "golden age." As people began to live longer and healthier the terms "elderly" and "seniors" stepped to the forefront. Whatever term is used in this history to refer to persons of advanced years is done with affection and with the recognition that as people age, they develop needs and concerns that are characteristic of that particular time in their life-cycle.

President/Chair — The organizational structure of UCRH has changed from time to time over the years and going from president of the Board of Directors to chair is one such example. With the many legal and policy documents that needed to be signed by the president of the corporation, it was important to have that position in the corporate office. The board sets the policy and approves procedures, giving the president or chief executive officer the authority to sign various documents. This change in structure precipitated a number of others that can be detected as the history of this ministry is studied.

Operations Council — The designation for this group within the organizational structure of UCRH has changed several times over the thirty-year history and the correct name is often misstated. The important thing to recognize is that it refers to the grassroots or group of local persons related to a cost center who help support, advise, guide and encourage the person responsible for the ongoing work of that particular segment of ministry. As the work of the Board of Directors expanded beyond the bounds of J.W. Abernethy Center, there needed to be a group of local persons who could meet more than once or twice a year who could give some guidance and support to the administrator of that center. The first group to be appointed was referred to as the Newton Advisory Committee or the Newton Operations Advisory Committee.

After Piedmont Center was opened in 1986 the name of this group changed so it would carry the designation of the center such as Piedmont Operations Advisory Committee. In an effort to help those elected to this group feel a deeper sense of responsibility the decision was made that this group should be called Operations Councils, and each cost center should have such a group to help keep it focused and loyal to its mission. In 2001 it was voted to return the name to Advisory Council.

Maye and Julius Abernethy — These are two of the major benefactors of the ministry of UCRH. In the early days of the development of this ministry they were referred to with a great deal of affection because things were done in such an informal way. "Maye and Uncle Jule" were invited to meetings, sought out for counsel, looked to for continued support, and elected lifetime directors of the board. They were special people due the recognition they have been given to enable this dream to become a reality. Julius received an honorary doctor's degree in business administration in 1951 from Catawba College in Salisbury, N.C.

Residential Mall — The name Residential Mall was chosen for the building constructed in 1989 at Abernethy Center and in 1996 at Piedmont Center. The name was chosen because these buildings provided a variety of living opportunities for residents as well as a number of support services. In each case the building was attached to the existing health care component, which made it possible for an interchange of services and care. A person could live in the Mall and visit a spouse or another loved one, on a regular basis, who needed nursing care. The nursing home patient could also visit persons in the Mall when they were able. In 2000 the staff at Abernethy Center requested the name of the structure be changed to Pavilion for marketing purposes. On the Abernethy campus the cottages were renamed homes and the duplexes were renamed Patio Homes. The apartments are being referred to as Townhouses.



United Church
Retirement Homes, Inc.

100 Leonard Avenue Newton, NC 28658



Bridgeport National
Bindery, Inc.

JUNE 2003

